

A  
COLLECTION  
O F  
HARANGUES

Pronounc'd upon  
Several Occasions  
By the most Eminent  
MEMBERS  
O F T H E  
*French Academy,*

V I Z.

Mr FENELON,	{	Mr CASSAGNES,
FLECHIER,		FONTENELLE,
BOILEAU,		MONTIGNY,
PELISSON,		DACIER, &c.

And Translated into *English*

By BERNARD WILSON,  
Rector of FIRSBY in *Lincolnshire*,  
and Chaplain to the Honourable Colonel  
*Groves's* Regiment.

---

L O N D O N,  
Printed for JOHN WYAT, at the *Rose* in  
*St. Paul's* Church-yard. 1717.

COLLECTION

PLANT

Occurrence

7

PLANT

8

7





T O

Sir GEORGE MARKHAM, Bart.

S I R,

**T**HE following Papers, what Reception soever they may meet with in the World, may serve at least to convince it, how proud I am of Any Opportunity to return You my Publick Acknowledgments for the several Remarkable Instances of Favour, wherewith You have for a long Course of Years been pleas'd to honour me, in a manner so obliging, as if every single Benefaction had been the First, and so frequent, as if You design'd to put it out of my Power to call Any the Last.

A 2

But

iv DEDICATION.

But I shall not take the common Method of signalizing my Gratitude, by attempting an extravagant Panegyrick upon Your Abilities, or by lowering the rest of Mankind to place You above them. This I cannot, and in Truth I need not do: For it is my singular Happiness, that Your Merit is too excellent to require any Artifices of that Kind, and leaves me no Room to apprehend the Imputation of Flattery or Falshood, whatever I should say of Your eminent Qualities.

I mention with a particular Pleasure the uncommon Integrity, which shines in all Your Words and Actions, as it is a Virtue, wherein You place Your chief Delight, and from which no Advantages of the highest Worldly Grandeur could ever make You in the least depart, tho' Your Honour might be as securely guarded

## DEDICATION. V

ed against Publick Censure, as it is now against Private Reproach.

It is You, *Sir*, who have the peculiar Talent of understanding the whole Compass of the *British* Constitution so perfectly, as if You had apply'd Your self to this Study only, and the Policies of every Forreign State so exactly, as if You had been a Native of Every One, and more than Seven Cities had a Claim to Your Birth.

The Bounds of one Science are so very extensive, and those of Human Capacity so very narrow, that Men usually content themselves with the Pursuit of one single Science; but the Professors of most of them might trace You from one Art to another, and discover in Your Remarks, what had escap'd their own nicest Observations.

vi DEDICATION.

If Your comprehensive Character were to be drawn by the *French Academy*, each singular Member might exercise his Talent upon his own Favourite Excellency. The Advocate might applaud Your Skill in the LAWS, and find in You Matter enough for all his Copiousness of Expression. The Historiographer might enlarge upon Your Knowledge of Universal History. The Mathematician might draw the Lines of Your Character, and commend Your clear and penetrating Genius, without going out of his own Sphere. The Master of Polite Learning might embellish his Discourse with New Beauties, whilst he pointed out those, which You have observ'd. The able States-man might entertain himself with recollecting the several Arts and Maxims of Different Governments, wherein You are so eminently vers'd,  
that



# DEDICATION. vii

that scarce a Minister, residing at any Court, has perhaps conceiv'd a better Notion of them. In short, the most Eloquent Member, wherever his other Talents might lie, whether in the profound or polite Sciences, might extoll Your Method of winning Applause, without having recourse to any Pomp of Words, and admire a beautiful Simplicity of Expression, more persuasive than all the Charms of Rhetorick.

Thus each Member might draw his own Picture without Arrogance, whilst he describ'd Sir George Markham with Justice.

But notwithstanding this uncommon Variety of Qualifications, of which Your Character is compos'd, (and I forbear out of Regard to One of Your Virtues, to dwell too long upon the rest) notwithstanding, I



viii DEDICATION.

say, this Constellation of Excellencies, give me leave to add, that You treat upon the most difficult Parts of Learning without Ostentation, and are so far from having the Vanity of affecting a superior Genius, that the Hints, with which You modestly furnish Others, You carry on as their own Suggestions, and improve as much as may be to Their Advantage, rather than Your own. Tho' You do not fail to produce the most powerful Reasons, You never enter upon any Point without a peculiar sort of Diffidence, and are always the last Person confirm'd in Your own Sentiments. However, as distrustful as You are of Your own Abilities, You have the Art of fixing others in an Opinion, when You seem Yourself to be undetermin'd.

The Modesty, Humanity, and Complacency of Manners, which accom-

accompanies Your whole Behaviour, would win upon the Hearts of Mankind, tho' it were not adorn'd with so vast a Stock of Knowledge ; but when all these Qualities are united in the same Person, Learning, which usually carries with it a morose or disdainful Countenance, whenever it is display'd by You, appears in so amiable a Dress, and fits upon You with so good a Grace, that we may safely affirm, You do not owe more to Letters, than Letters owe to You.

I could proceed much further, but I will not deny Those, who at any Time bear a Share in Your Conversation, the Pleasure of remarking Excellencies, which I have not touch'd upon ; and in the mean time My Satisfaction shall be to express in the best manner I can the repeated Marks of Your Favour, which engage me to be with the profoundest

**X DEDICATION.**

est Veneration, and sincerest Gratitude,

**S I R,**

Your most Devoted

**A N D**

Most Faithful Humble Servant,

**BERNARD WILSON**

**THE**



T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HE Translator of these Harangues has no other View than to give the English Reader a Taste of the French Oratory, and to place before Him in the best Lights he could those artful Strokes, which the Members of the Academy have drawn, and upon some Occasions, He begs leave to say, have misapply'd: They have not contented themselves with raising the Honour of one Prince, without endeavouring to diminish that of Another, whose Immortal Actions need no Art or Pomp of Rhetorick to adorn them. But it is most humbly conceiv'd, that the following Pieces may serve as a Model for any Writer,  
who



xii      The PREFACE.

*who shall have the Courage to describe the Virtues of a true Hero, of a Wise, Just, Victorious, and Human Monarch. Whenever a Work of this Kind shall be attempted, we shall have no Occasion to make Reprisals upon Their celebrated Demi-God, by insulting a Prince, who was subdued, long before Death had triumph'd over Him. However, tho' the Object of our Praises be different, the Method of Praising may be the same, we may justly and honourably make use of Their Artillery, especially when, instead of being employ'd in the Defence of Superstition and Tyranny, it is rescued out of their Hands for the Support of the True Religion, and the Happiest Government in the World.*

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*A Discourse*

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*A Discourse*



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Mr. de BEZONS the 30th of Fe-  
bruary 1643. when he was admitted  
a Member of the Academy in the  
room of Mr. Chancellor SEGUIER,  
who was chosen Protector of it.*

GENTLEMEN,

**T**H E Favour, which I have the Ho-  
nour to receive from you, I could  
never have had the Assurance to  
expect, tho' I passionately wish'd  
for it; and if my Acknowledgments do not  
answer the Dignity of your Benefaction, 'tis  
because I cannot find any Words, which  
fall not infinitely short of the Obligation.  
But as the most luminous Bodies dazle the  
Eye, and cause Blindness by their Excess of  
Light, so this extraordinary Favour fills me  
with a Crowd of Thoughts, and at the  
same time disables me from uttering them.  
I have always had a Value for this Society,  
which I consider'd as the Sovereign Judge  
of Eloquence, where only one might meet  
B with



with fix'd and certain Rules of an Art, concerning which others have only collected a Set of Doubts and Conjectures. The Academy has had this Advantage, that Her very Birth was Illustrious, that She did not wait for Her Reputation from a long Course of Years; but as Rivers, which are navigable even from their Source, so Her Original was as famous as Her Progress. There was no space of Time between Her Rise, and Her Perfection. And indeed Gentlemen, it was impossible that the Foundations of this Edifice should be less Noble than they were, being laid by the same Person, to whom you owe your compleat Establishment. He, who thought so justly upon every Occasion, was sensible, that Glory might be as well acquir'd by Letters, as by Arms, and that the Art of persuading Men was not inferior to that of overcoming them, the one being the Work of Force, the other of Reason. He gave to this Company a Reputation, which the Enemies of Virtue flatter'd themselves would vanish at his Death; but the Authority of our new Protector, and the particular Countenance, which He shews us, are convincing Arguments, that these ill Presages were ill-grounded, and that our Credit, instead of suffering any Diminution by the common Loss, will be preserv'd intire under the Advantages of so Noble a Protection.

Protection. For my Part, Gentlemen, who am the first Person you have admitted into your Body since this Change of Affairs, I would willingly answer the Opinion, which your Goodness has conceiv'd of me, but I hope to gain amongst you the Qualifications, which I want, and which I ought to have brought with me; I expect much more from your Instructions and Example, than you have to expect from My Industry and Labours: All that I am able to promise you, is a sincere Affection, and an Attendance as constant and punctual as possible: For tho' my Duty did not oblige me to take part in your Exercises, my Advantage and my Pleasure would not suffer me to be absent, and I am not so far an Enemy to my own Good and my own Satisfaction, as to neglect the Opportunities of profiting in so excellent a School, and of reaping the Fruits of the Honour you have done me by introducing into this agreeable Society, which engages me in the strictest Alliance with so many Persons of Merit, to whom I shall thro' the whole Course of my Life render all manner of Respect and Service.

*An HARANGUE pronounc'd by  
Mr. PELISSON the 30th of De-  
cember 1652. occasion'd by the Re-  
solution, which the French Academy  
had taken, in consideration of the ex-  
cellent History he had compos'd, that  
he should fill the first vacant Place in  
the Body, and in the mean while  
should have the Priviledge of assisting  
at their Assemblies, and passing his  
Opinion there as a Member of the  
Academy, with this Clause, that no  
other Person should be admitted to  
the like Favour upon any Consideration  
whatever.*

GENTLEMEN,

**I**F you have entertain'd any Hopes of  
meeting with such Acknowledgements  
from me, as may either be answerable to  
the Greatness of so uncommon a Mark of  
your Esteem, or suitable to the Dignity of  
so Illustrious an Assembly, I question not  
but you will soon be ready to condemn  
your selves for laying so extraordinary an  
Obligation

Obligation upon me: But if one may say of the Favours, which you bestow, what some have said of those, which we receive from Heaven, that whoever has a true Sense of their just Value, deserves to be possess'd of them, never did any one merit the Enjoyment of them more than my self, and never did any Persons make a more judicious Choice than you.

I am sensible, how great an Honour it is to be admitted a Member of so eminent a Body, and how considerable an Advantage attends so great an Honour; how many Imperfections I had to check me from aspiring to this Dignity, and how many Obstacles lay in your Way to hinder you from advancing me to it.

These several Considerations are perpetually presenting themselves to my Imagination; there is not one of them, that does not engage my Attention, that does not affect me in a very sensible manner, and raise in me a particular Sense of Gratitude.

Shall I begin with the Glory, that redounds to me from so distinguishing a Favour? Kings, Conquerors, and even some of those Heroes, whom Antiquity has ranked in the Number of its Gods, have thought it a mighty Honour to be created Citizens of certain Republicks. But, Gentlemen, to set this Matter in its truest Light, a Republick,



publick, in what flourishing Condition soever it may be, is to be consider'd no otherwise than as a Collection of People, whom nothing but Interest and Necessity has form'd into an Alliance, where sometimes Riches bear the Sway, sometimes Force and Violence, at other times Artifice and Deceit, but very rarely it is, that Merit and Virtue are admitted to any Share in the Government. Certainly if we are not dazled by outward Pomp, if we judge by our Reason, rather than our Sight, as much as the Soul is superior to the Body, and the desire of Knowledge to that of Life, so far does an Academy excel a Republick, so much does the Honour, which you have done me, surpass that, which those Kings and Conquerors, and even Gods of Antiquity valued themselves upon. And when from these Reflections in general I descend to others in particular, when I consider with my self this celebrated Society, establish'd in the first City of the first Kingdom in the World, form'd by the greatest Minister, that was ever plac'd in Authority, and protect'd at this time by Another, who, to say all, could not be more worthy to succeed him, than he is, when I represent to my Imagination such a Society as this, compos'd of so many excellent Men, known, esteem'd, and admir'd by all *Europe*; when I imagine within  
my



my self, that I shall for the future be possess'd of a Place amongst Them, and see my Name dispers'd with Theirs throughout all the World, and share in those immortal Praises, which They have deserv'd; shall I tell you, Gentlemen, my Thoughts? I am in a Doubt, whether I wake or sleep, and whether I am not in one of those delightful Dreams, where we imagine our selves to be in Paradise, without ever quitting our Habitation.

But, Gentlemen, these pleasing Delusions leave nothing behind them; whereas the Glory, of which I am admitted to be a Sharer, must be quickly attended with substantial and real Advantages. To what Purpose should I dissemble in such a Case? Tho' I have cherish'd a passionate Love for Learning, even from my Infancy: Tho' I have directed all my Endeavours to the Art of writing well, it would neither be easy nor possible for me to attain to that Art without this extraordinary Favour, which you have done me. There are plainly a few exalted Geniuses, whom Nature takes a Pleasure in forming, that possess every thing within themselves, that know what was never taught them, that do not follow Rules, but make them, and prescribe them to others. Such are you, Gentlemen, this Day, such formerly were some eminent Per-

sonages of *Rome* and *Athens* ; but as to Us of an inferior Rank, if we have no other Force to rely upon but our own, if we call in no Forreign Assistance, how is it possible, that by the Power of one single Judgment and Fancy, which have nothing in them above the ordinary Pitch, we can ever please so many different Geniuses, so many various Judgments, to whom our Works are expos'd ? How is it possible, that we can of our own Stock furnish our selves with an infinite number of Excellencies, the principal of which are seemingly of a Nature contrary one to another, that our Writings should at the same Time be fine and solid, strong and delicate, profound and polite, that we should join in one and the same Composition, Simplicity and Art, Sweetness and Majesty, Perspicuity and Brevity, Negligence and Accuracy, Boldness and Modesty, and sometimes even Madness and Reason. It is enough, if Nature has supply'd us with a Part of those Qualities, so necessary to such extraordinary Performances, we must be oblig'd to the rest for Instruction ; we must have recourse to Precepts and Examples, Friends and Masters ; and these Precepts, these Examples, these Friends, these Masters, 'tis amongst You, Gentlemen, that I propose to find. What shall I now say of that sweet Disposition,

tion, which, I imagine, reigns in all your Conferences? Those, whom you admit to them, are able enough in some measure to represent to themselves the Honour and Advantage, which are deriv'd from them; but as to the Pleasure, which must undoubtedly flow to you from the agreeable Communication of all excellent Things, the Pleasure, which Virtue and Friendship, which a perfect Harmony amongst your selves, and a Conformity in all laudable Pursuits, mix with all your Conversations, one must, if I mistake not, taste it, before one can conceive it, it is to be felt, and not express'd. And to attest this Truth, *Gentlemen*, I call You to witness, I call to witness those Hours, which run so swiftly, and those unwelcome Nights, which usually come too quickly upon you, and break up your Assemblies.

But I dwell too long, *Gentlemen*, upon that Part of your Generosity, which is the least remarkable. It might have become me to have thank'd you in this manner, had you conferr'd this Honour upon me, either in Consideration of my Merit, or in Regard to my pressing Sollicitations, or out of pure Necessity to fill up a Vacancy, and to keep up your Old Rules. But now that you think fit to shut your Eyes to all my Imperfections, to anticipate my Pursuits  
and

and Expectations, and for my Sake to forget your Laws and your Customs; since no Obstacle, how great soever, has presented it self, that your Goodness has not surmounted; what Expressions, what Eloquence, tho' it were your own, would be sufficient to return you my due Acknowledgments. I am willing to pass by those Defects, which you your selves have been unwilling to look into, and which should have hinder'd you from placing your Thoughts on me; and would to God I could either correct or conceal them for ever from you. But this Excess, this Profusion of your Favours, this Method of obliging me, if I may be allow'd the Expression, against all Method, will not permit me to be silent. I fear, *Gentlemen*, that I am speaking with too much Freedom. You have done, methinks, on this Occasion more than either you ought or could do; you have had in some measure a greater Regard to My Honour than your own, and have had the Interest of one private Person, without any Merit, more at Heart than the Interest of all your August Body. I was thinking, *Gentlemen*, and possibly it might be your Thought, that this would have been the principal Topick of my Discourse; but how can I dwell upon a Subject, where, if I have a mind to applaud your Goodness,

I find



I find my self almost necessitated to condemn your Indulgence, where all my Returns would carry with them so many Marks of Reproach, where I could neither excuse you without Pride, nor accuse you without Ingratitude? Indeed if the Members of the *Academy* never did such an Honour to any Person, never had any Person so true and sincere an Intention to do Honour to Them, if they have violated their own Laws for my Sake, they shall never have Cause to complain, that I violate them. But I fear that all my good Resolutions can never excuse Those, which they have taken. Who am I, *Gentlemen*, that, to favour me, they should shake the Foundations, which have been laid with such Strength of Judgment, and establish'd by the Practice of so many Years? Who am I, that, to receive me into this Sacred Place, it should be necessary not to open the Gates, but if I dare speak it, to beat down the very Walls and Ramparts, as Men would do for the Triumphant Entry of a Victorious Monarch? I should be carried away with Vanity, *Gentlemen*, if I proceeded any farther. I am transported with that pleasing Confusion of Thought, which Joy and Gratitude, and all the other agreeable Passions, when rais'd to their highest Pitch, do fill me with, and in this Disorder of Mind all  
I can

I can do, is to repeat my own Words, and finish my Discourse with the same Expressions, with which it was begun. If you have entertain'd any Hopes of meeting with such Acknowledgments from me, as may either be answerable to the Greatness of so remarkable a Favour, or suitable to the Dignity of so Illustrious an Assembly, I question not but you have already condemn'd your selves for laying so singular an Obligation upon me; but if we may be said to deserve it, when we have a just Sense of its Worth, never did any one merit it more than my self, and never did any Persons make a more judicious Choice than You.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd the First of November by Mr PELISSON, upon his filling the Place of Mr Porcheres.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I** Could have wish'd never to have receiv'd the News of any Gentleman's Death of this Society, and to have continu'd a Supernumerary the whole Course of my Life, which was an Honour far exceeding my Deserts; however, since Affairs must take another Turn, I cannot but be pleas'd

pleas'd to find, that your illustrious Society does this Day confirm the Suffrages, it had before made in my Favour, without being driven to other Resolutions, either by the numerous Faults, which must have been discover'd in me, since I had the Honour to assist at these Meetings, or thro' the various Murmurings, which have been rais'd on all Sides against that unfortunate Work, which, as inoffensive as it is, could not have the good Luck to give equal Satisfaction to all sorts of People. I find my self, *Gentlemen*, under a Necessity of repeating the Protestations, which I have frequently made, that, in the Composition as well as Publication of that Book, I never entertain'd any other Design than to be serviceable to the Society, to oblige all the particular Members of it, to do Honour to the Memory of our late Protector, and Justice to the Merit and Extraction of our Present one. And to this Protestation, *Gentlemen*, I will add another, which is, that I shall not follow the Example of Those, who declare a passionate Esteem for their Mistresses in the happy Days of Courtship, and are no sooner ty'd in Matrimony, than they shew their Dis taste to it; on the contrary, you shall see me redouble my Pains and Diligence, and by my respectful Behaviour towards this Body in general, and to every Member  
in

in particular, I shall endeavour to give you very evident Proofs, that a Soul, which is not altogether mercenary, is more influenc'd by the Remembrance and Acknowledgment of Favours already receiv'd, than by the Hopes and Assurances of receiving them.

---

*A Discourse pronounc'd in the Year 1661 by Mr de CASSAGNES, when he was admitted in the room of Mr Saint Amant.*

*Gentlemen,*

**S**INCE it is more Honourable to bestow a Favour, than to discharge a Debt, I acknowledge my self unworthy of a Place in this *Academy*, that you may appear the more worthy of Applause for conferring it upon me, and that the Choice, which you have done me the Honour to make this Day, may gain you the Character of generous Benefactors, as in all the other Choices you have acquir'd the Reputation of equitable Judges: However, as high an Obligation as this is, yet since by admitting me into this August Assembly, you have put me under the Necessity of returning you my  
publick



publick Acknowledgments, I will take the Liberty to say, that either you ought not to have shewn any Regard at all for me, or you ought to have shewn me much more than you have, and either have refus'd me the Honour, which I am not worthy to receive, or discharg'd me from an Obligation, which I am not able to pay ; and most certain it is, that the Favours which You grant, are not like those, which are usually receiv'd in Civil Commerce, for They only engage us to common Acknowledgments and ordinary Returns of Gratitude, in which Cases there needs no more towards acquitting ones self handsomly, than to discover an Inclination to do it ; and in short, whatsoever we receive without Ingratitude, we enjoy without Reproach. But here to what purpose is all the Demonstration of a tender Affection, without the Marks of a bright Genius ? It is not sufficient to have a good Disposition, unless you are bless'd with an happy Thought ; it is not sufficient to avoid the Imputation of being Ungrateful, unless we acquire the Glory of being Eloquent ; in a word, it is not sufficient that we are pleas'd with the secret Motions of our own sincere and grateful Resentment, unless we please the Sovereign Judges of polite Learning by the substantial Ornaments of an ingenious and elegant Discourse. This Consideration

sideration might very well prevent my  
 speaking, if you would allow me the Liber-  
 ty to be silent ; but since that is forbidden  
 either by your Laws or Customs, I find my  
 self at this time under the same Circum-  
 stances with those, who hazard themselves  
 in Battel, where even Despair it self in-  
 spires them with some Degree of Hope. In  
 my Opinion, Necessity may produce Wit as  
 well as Courage, and I begin to hope, that  
 if agreeable Passions have a natural Power  
 to make us Eloquent, Those which your Ge-  
 nerosity has rais'd in my Breast, will make  
 me express the Favour, you have done me,  
 in as lively a manner, as I now conceive it.  
 When I reflect upon this glorious and sin-  
 gular Obligation, my Mind is entertain'd  
 by Turns with the pleasing View of the  
 past, present, and future ; and that I might  
 conceive a true Idea of its just Value, I have  
 already consider'd the Hopes and Fears,  
 from which I have been freed, the Joy,  
 which does at present arise in me, and the  
 advantageous Consequences, which may  
 reasonably be expected hereafter.

As one can never fall into a greater Mis-  
 fortune, than to embrace a Profession, which  
 is not suitable to ones Genius, You, *Gentle-*  
*men*, have eas'd me from the Pain of an  
 Uncertainty, which had long perplex'd me,  
 for I have to this Day been in dispute with  
 my

my self, whether I had not been so unhappy as to have made a wrong Choice, and whether, by dedicating my self to Learning, I had obey'd the Voice of Heaven, and follow'd the Dictates of Nature. The strong Passion, which I had for Literature, was not sufficient to remove those Fears; for tho' the Love of Virtue has such an Effect upon us, as to make us Virtuous, the Love of Learning has not such an Influence upon us, as to make us Learned, and we every Day see an infinite Number of People, that are passionately fond of useful Lectures, and ingenious Conversation, that maintain a close Correspondence with the Dead, as well as the Living, and after all this make no Improvement from their long and laborious Searches after Knowledge. But for my Part, I must confess my self under no further Apprehensions of being rank'd in the Number of those unfortunate Gentlemen. You confirm my Choice by Yours, and You let me see, that I was not unacquainted with my own Genius, and convinc'd me by a Glorious Instance, that I had pursued the likeliest Tract in the Way to Honour. Honour, which every Man covets, ought to be in a singular manner coveted by Men of Literature, because in Their Condition, which for the most Part is attended with no other Reward than that of Fame, there is no Medium

dium betwixt Praise and Dispraise; it is shameful not to be Eminent, and whoever is not the Object of Admiration, is the Object of Derision.

Can any one now be so insensible as not to perceive, that your Esteem is always attended with that of the Publick, that you are so far Masters of Reputation, as not only to enjoy it in an ample manner your selves, but to put others in Possession of it. Who does not see, that you, Gentlemen, have open'd to me the Gates of Honour, by opening to me those of this Place, and that my Name being once enroll'd with yours can be in no Danger amidst so many shining Lights of ever falling again into Obscurity.

But besides since Ambition, how noble a Passion soever it may be, never fails to give the Mind much Perplexity, and keep it in a very restless State, you, Gentlemen, have been a Means of quieting that unruly Tempest within me, you have stopt the Course, and fill'd the Extent of my Desires; and having honour'd me with a Title the most glorious, that I could have wish'd, you have reduc'd me to the happy Necessity of having nothing to wish for More. In fine, is there any new Honour, which after this has Charms enough to engage my Pursuit after it, or my Desire of it? Can I ever be a Member of a more August Body? Where  
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can I find another eminent Society, composed of so many bright Wits, that owes it's Rise to a more Illustrious Founder, and it's Protection this Day to a Genius, so glorious to the Age, so necessary to the World, and to say all, so highly worthy of your Encomiums. I am very sensible that you have made this great Cardinal, and this incomparable Chancellor the Subjects of your Pannegyrics. By this Means you secure to one another reciprocally the Enjoyment of Fame; and as your Writings are able to immortalize Their Actions, Their Actions are no less able to immortalize your Writings; so manifest it is, that it belongs to you alone, Gentlemen, to give a suitable Recompence to Heroick Virtues, and that That Nation, which places its Ambition in cultivating the Exercises of Wit, and is enrich'd with as many Academies as Towns, must acknowledge for the Honour of *France*, that it never produc'd any Genius, which excelled you, nor does at this time produce any, that equals you. The People of that Nation, I say, must confess, that if They possess the Country of the *Romans*, You enjoy the Inheritance of their Learning, and improve upon their Example; that if you are not Their Descendants, you deserve to be so; and in short (to apply upon this Occasion one of their own Thoughts) if it were in  
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their Power to adopt any Children out of the vast Numbers of the present Generation, they would immediately fix their Eyes upon you, who are the most lively Image of themselves, who have the express Character of their Brightness imprinted on you, and shew your near Resemblance to those Great Men by your Lofty and Majestick Eloquence.

I find my self then admitted into the Society of the most Illustrious Personages in the World, and perceive this very Day, that all my past Pains are converted into present Joys, that I am for ever freed from those perplexing Thoughts, which divided my Life betwixt Hopes and Fears, and in a great measure disturb'd the Repose of it. You, *Gentlemen*, never felt such Transports of Joy upon your first admission into this Society, you that were born, what we now find you, who had every one your Place in the Academy, before you fill'd it, and being always assur'd of the Post, which you were one Day to possess, waited for it without Hope, and enter'd upon it without Emotion. As to what regards my self, I am not able to judge, whether you have not been deceiv'd in me, or whether I have not deceiv'd my self; but whatever it be, I triumph in my Honour, and good Fortune, and esteem my self equally happy, whether you have done me a Favour, or I do my  
self

self an Injustice, whether it be, that you overvalue me, or that I undervalue my self. What still redoubles my Satisfaction, is, that the Glory, which I now possess, is no ways subject to the Mutability of Human Affairs. There is no possibility of losing it, when it is once acquir'd; it raises Envy without fearing it; it despises the Caprice of Fortune; it overcomes the very Power of Death, because it is this, which gives us Immortality. But we are not only to make a Judgment of its Solidity by its Duration, but by its Effects and Consequences; and this Head I ought perhaps particularly to dwell upon, because I am persuaded, that you your selves have a more especial Regard to it. Yes, without doubt, you have considered me rather with respect to the future, than the present, without reflecting what I was, you have employ'd your whole Thoughts upon what I might be, and without waiting to make me happy, till I might deserve my Happiness, you have crown'd with an anticipated Reward the favourable Hopes you had entertain'd of my Labours.

To express my Thoughts clearly, give me leave, Gentlemen, to declare against that vulgar Error, with which so many have been led away, that there are no Rules to be laid down for teaching the Art of Speaking, and that if they have a Mind to ex-

press themselves happily, whether in Prose, or Verse, they have nothing more to do than to give a Loose to their Fancy, and pursue without any Restraint the Flights of Nature. That every one naturally delivers himself handsomely upon those things, of which he has a clear Conception, was the Opinion of a Philosopher; but methinks one might use with more Justice the Expression of a celebrated Orator, that Men speak very uncouthly of those things, which they do not understand, and they cannot express themselves with a good Grace in those Points, which they do conceive, except they are skill'd in the Art of Speaking. This Noble Art, or rather these two Noble Arts, one of which teaches us the Language of the Gods, the other the Language of Men, have been well understood and practis'd by the Ancients, who are the Masters, as well as Models of Both. But neither their Examples nor their Precepts can furnish us with any perfect Instructions, because their Custom does not altogether agree with ours; and we must not think of being relish'd by the present Times, except we not only suit our selves to the Genius of the Language, but fall in with the Taste of the Age, and the Humour of the Nation. Besides, what Probability is there, that these Great Men could have left behind them the utmost Bounds



Bounds of their Knowledge, and the whole Business of their Meditations? We see, that in a long Train of Conferences, which have been held, a Thousand Doubts have been rais'd and resolv'd, either accidentally or designedly, which could neither have been started or remov'd in Works of a confin'd and regular Nature, and as in the Relation of such Matters, as depend upon the Memory, Books always contain more Learning than their Authors, so in Matters of Reflection, which depend upon the Judgment, Authors do always abound with more Learning, than their Works. If therefore all these Oracles of ancient *Greece*, and ancient *Italy* were still Living, they would finish in their Conversation, what they have begun in their Writings; they would lay down different Rules according to the Diversity of Customs, Languages, and Geniuses, they would descend from Generals to Particulars, and by rendring the common Precepts peculiar and proper to us, they would lead us as it were by the Hand upon the Theatre of Honour. Certainly it were much to be wish'd, that Heaven, after having once oblig'd the World with these Men, had never snatch'd them from it; but let us no longer lament their Loss, since we see it so happily repair'd; for we find in You, Gentlemen, all that we should be able to find in

Them, and that improv'd to a greater Degree of Perfection by the excellency of Your Judgment, superior to all the Advantages of Art. You can point out to us, where it may be useful to imitate the Ancients, and where it may be proper to take a contrary or a different Method. You are acquainted with the whole Compass of our Language, with every thing that is Natural as well as Foreign to it; You instruct all, whom You have a Mind to instruct; You Charm all, whom You are pleas'd to Charm, and by these wonderful Effects re-establish amongst us the Sovereignty of Eloquence, and the Divinity of Poetry. Why then shall I dissemble my Hopes? Since they are grounded rather upon Your Assistance, than my own Strength, I have reason to believe, that You will one Day or other make me worthy of that August Body, into which You have given me so favourable an Admittance, that after having receiv'd from You no small share of Honour, I shall likewise receive from You some share of Merit; and that since Care and Culture, when seconded by the Influence of the Sun, sometimes inspires fruitfulness into a Soil, which is none of the happiest, so Labour and Study, when animated by the Presence of Your Assemblies, will fortifie the Weakness of my Genius, and correct my natural Imperfections.

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It is not, that I expect ever to go such great Lengths, or take so direct a Course as my Guides, and come up to that Idea of Perfection, which You have rais'd in me ; but without pretending to equal You, I esteem it Honour enough to follow You. Very high are the Places even below Your Rank, and tho' we are excell'd by You, we may excel the rest of the World. These, *Gentlemen*, are the solid Hopes, which Your Favours give me leave to conceive, to which I add another, which is the most agreeable Object of my Wishes, and the most delightful Entertainment of my Thoughts, that, in the remaining Part of my Life I promise my self the good Fortune of placing so many Men in the Number of my Friends, who are now in the Capacity of Brethren. I am sensible, that these Illustrious Friendships are never the Work of one Day, but of a Tryal of many Years, and that the good Disposition of the Mind may contribute more towards procuring them, than any other sort of Merit. Wherefore as Integrity does rather depend upon our selves, than either Learning or Politeness, I dare promise You, *Gentlemen*, that if I cannot reach the Loftiness of Your Eloquence, I will imitate at least the Prudence of Your Conduct ; that if I often violate the Rules of Art, I will more punctually observe those  
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of Virtue, and, in fine, if I never can do any Honour to this Academy by my Writings, I will never do it any Discredit by my Actions.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd in January 1670 by Mr de Montigny Abbot, afterwards Bishop of Leon, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr Boileau.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**F the Way into this Illustrious Company was open only to those happy Geniuses, whom Nature has form'd to be a Rule and Model for others, if Men could only be introduc'd into this Place by the Assistance of the highest Degree of Learning and Politeness, if, in short, it were necessary to resemble You, before we could be admitted into Your Society, how far soever my Ambitious Wishes might have carried me in private, I should have taken care never to have declar'd them, and have dreaded in You those very Qualifications, which all the World admires. But on the other hand, *Gentlemen*, if in these fatal Conjunctions, when You are under a Necessity of filling the Places, that become vacant, You had a  
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particular Regard to those, who best understood the Dignity and Importance of them; if the high Opinion, which Men have conceiv'd of Your Abilities, were to be look'd upon as the surest Mark of their own; and if You gave the glorious Preference rather to such, as know how to value You, than to such as are able to imitate You, how distrustful soever I may be of my own Talents, I dare affirm, that no Body could plead a better Title to Your Favour than my self, and the extraordinary Esteem, which I profess for You, would very justly procure me That, which You have shewn me.

For, *Gentlemen*, I do not look upon this Illustrious Body only as the Institution of that Incomparable Minister, whose Genius, more extensive than his Fortune, and more eminent than his Dignity, disdain'd to undertake any ordinary Concern; I consider it likewise as the Master-piece of his Politics, who, without leaving his Memory in the Power of Envy, has consecrated it to Immortality, and without being any ways burdensome to the Publick, or his Successors, has given the World Occasion to say as much in his Favour, as has been said in Commendation of the best Beloved of all the Emperors, that he was honour'd with more Encomiums, after he was Dead, than Others have receiv'd, whilst they Liv'd.

If

If this Great Man, from the Height of that Glory, with which we may presume him to be blest, continues to interest himself in That of the Kingdom, what a Pleasure has he in seeing, that His Instructions are seconded by your Labours, that the Muses, whom he so much cherish'd, are no longer treated as Foreigners ; that the Graces, which he had introduc'd, are naturaliz'd ; that our Language, which he employ'd so much Pains in polishing, is no more that *Gaulish*, and *Gothick* Dialect, unknown to its Neighbours, despis'd in its own Country, and banish'd from all sort of good Books, but that it has spread it self into all the Courts of *Europe*, where it is the Delight of their Princes, and the Interpreter of our Ambassadors ; that, without losing any thing of its native Simplicity, it has acquir'd Delicacy, that, without ranging its Sentences in an Order different from that of its Thoughts, it has been made capable of receiving a sprightly Turn ; that it contends with the *Italian* for Smoothness, and with the *Spanish* for Majesty ; and that it has enrich'd it self with so many Elegant Translations of the Remains of the Immortal Dead Languages, the *Greek* and the *Latin*, which now have no other Advantage over it, than that of their venerable Antiquity ?

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All *France*, Gentlemen, values it self upon it, and applauds You for it. It invites You to continue Your Application, as owing its flourishing Condition to it. It pays Your Voluntary Labours with Self-interested Commendations, and because You are the only Society of the Kingdom, that works without any Reward, it thinks it self oblig'd to recompense Your Endeavours with an Honour, that is preferable to any Reward whatever. To speak ones Mother Tongue gracefully has formerly been esteem'd an Honourable Qualification. The shining Heroes of Antiquity, the *Scylla's*, the *Pompey's*, and a Thousand others, have been in a singular manner celebrated for it; after so many Battels won, so many Provinces subdu'd, they did not think it below their Character to be commended for having well understood a Language, which they had learn'd from their Nurse.

In short, Men appear superior one to another, only in Proportion to their Talent of expressing themselves. Almost every one feels the same Impulses, almost every one falls into the same Way of Thinking, nay, those are the most beautiful Thoughts, that are the most easy, and the most natural. What therefore distinguishes them, and sets them off, is nothing but the manner of speaking them, and the Turn which is given

ven to them in the Expression ; they are naturally rough Diamonds , which only shine, as they are polish'd, and which owe not their Value more to Nature, that forms them, than to Art, that places them to Advantage. How desirable and ingenious a Talent is this, which not only adorns the Mind with an infinite Variety of Graces, that render it agreeable to others ; but which likewise ennobles it self by an Alliance with all the Virtues, that render it profitable to ones self ; for it is certain, that the Beauty of Language and true Eloquence can no more display it self without Innocency of Manners, than the Flower can open it self without the Influence of its Root ; and especially, *Gentlemen*, in a Kingdom, whose Language has this particular Gift of being so chaste and so severe, that it cannot bear the least Extravagancies in common Discourse, which requires so much Liberty ; nor even in our Poetry, which every where else allows it self so great a Latitude ; that it draws a Veil, as it were, over all the unseemly Idea's, which it exposes to View ; and in short, that it loses immediately all its Vigour and Beauty, if it be not adorn'd and supported by an honest Heart : So that the Character of a Member of the *French Academy* may be defin'd with more Justice, than



than was that formerly of a perfect Orator,  
*An Honest Man, who is a good Speaker.*

There is, without doubt, a near Relation betwixt the Soul, and its Expressions. They are its most natural Images; and He amongst the *Romans*, who applied himself so closely to the Study of their Language and their Manners, has made this Remark, that the Language was no longer pure at *Rome*, than whilst the Manners were so, and they did not cease to speak well, till they grew weary of living well.

Let us go still farther upon the Credit of History; it seems, by I know not what Fatality, as if the Fortune of Empires were involv'd in that of their Language.

The Empire of the *Greeks* was never in a more flourishing Condition, than whilst it retain'd the Purity of the *Attick* Dialect, which charm'd even their very Enemies, and which they fancy'd the Gods themselves would have borrow'd, if they had occasion to communicate their Thoughts to the World; as soon as that Divine Language underwent a sensible Alteration, the State of Absolute Independency, which they were so jealous of losing, began to decline, and they saw at once the Ruin of their Empire, and their Eloquence.

Did not the *Roman* Empire share the same Fate with the *Latin*, neither of which arriv'd

riv'd to their full Strength and perfect Beauty till the Reign of *Augustus*, and both of them apparently decay'd and lost Ground under That of his Successor? But why need we fetch Examples from so great a Distance, since we may produce such as are Nearer and more Remarkable? Is it not true, *Gentlemen*, that if this Monarchy never attain'd to so high a Pitch of Glory, as that, to which our invincible Monarch has rais'd it, by the Wisdom of his Counsels, and the Prodigies of his Valour; our Language likewise never arriv'd at so high a Point of Perfection, as that, wherein You have plac'd it, by the Delicacy of Your Expressions, and the Justness of Your Performances?

The Lustre of it, which has spread it self over this Nation, is too visible not to be universally perceiv'd; but I question whether the World has sufficiently apprehended, what Pains and Qualifications have been necessary to raise it, and of how extensive and laborious a Nature Your Employment is. All the other Sciences are confin'd to certain Objects, which they never transgress; That of a Member of the Academy is Immense, is Infinite, and is the only one, whose Views ought not to be limited. As it is His Province to pass his Judgment upon all sorts of Discourses, it is necessary, that his Knowledge extend to all sorts of Subjects;

jects; that he be equally familiar with *Par-*  
*nassus*, and the *Lyceum*, the Barr, and the  
 Pulpit, the Country and the Court; that  
 sometimes he may quote Antiquity to pre-  
 serve those Terms, upon which it may have  
 stamp'd a kind of Authority, sometimes  
 give a Check to Custom, which frequently  
 speaks as idly as it acts; in short, it is ne-  
 cessary, that he acquire a Stock of Know-  
 ledge as universal as his Jurisdiction, that  
 bearing an implacable Hatred to ill Expres-  
 sions, he should attack them even in their  
 strongest Fortifications, that he may be able,  
 and sometimes dare to alter Decrees past in  
 Sovereign Courts, to criticise upon Ha-  
 rangues made by Generals of Armies, to  
 call to Account the Orders of Kings, and  
 to censure Words pronounc'd in the Chair  
 of Infallibility.

All the Tribunals of the Kingdom, *Gen-*  
*tlemen*, are very willing to appeal to Yours,  
 especially whilst it continues under the Glo-  
 rious Protection of this Great Personage, as  
 just in his Discourse, as in his Actions, as  
 well instructed in the Laws of the Lan-  
 guage, as in Those of the Realm, who  
 weighs his Expressions as exactly, as if they  
 were the Interests of other Men, and whom  
 Heaven has thought fit to preserve in his  
 Eminent Dignity longer than it has done  
 any of his Predecessors, only because it is  
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the more necessary to the Happiness of *France*, and the Glory of the Academy. Custom it self, that Tyrant of living Languages, which formerly pretended to the Right of Life and Death, and Resurrection, as it were, over all Words, which order'd them generally, rather according to the Caprice of the Vulgar, than the Advice of the Judicious, at present gives Attention to Your Decisions, and has never any Contest with the World, wherein it does not consult You as her Oracles, and appeal to You as Her Judges. You have found out the Secret of regulating her Extravagancies, and of fixing Her Inconstancy, by the Means of Your Excellent Dictionary, a Work of so many Hands, and so many Years, an Eternal Azylum of Expressions, stamp'd with Your Mark, a Publick Treasury of all the Riches of our Language, the Edition whereof, as it is expected with the utmost Impatience, must raise the Curiosity of Strangers, gain the Applause of the *French*, and procure the Favour of a Prince, who, as he is every Day performing Actions worthy to be immortaliz'd, has a particular Interest in favouring those, who are the best able to immortalize them.

What an Advantage is it, Gentlemen, for a Man full of Uncertainties about his Language, who has nothing to recommend him,  
but



but his Disposition to learn, to be admitted into a School, where he will draw from the Fountain Head Solutions for every Doubt, where he will find as many Masters, as You have been pleas'd to chuse Companions, where, by a sort of Enchantment, he will see as many Flowers spring up, as You shall pronounce Words, where he will be able at once both to instruct and divert himself.

There is no Darknes, that does not vanish, no Clouds, that do not disperse upon our Approach to You; as we see certain Bodies in the World, which, tho' opaque, and without any Light in themselves, borrow so much Brightness from the Sun, to which they are expos'd, as makes them shine, to all Appearance, like the Stars; so, *Gentlemen*, there is no Understanding so cloudy, as does not brighten at Your Lights, none so low, as does not elevate it self by Your Example, none so ordinary, as does not borrow Reputation enough from You to appear it self Illustrious in the World.

How impatient was I to be in a Condition of reaping the Advantage of those delightful Instructions! What a pressing Occasion had I for them! How agreeable is it always to be able to express ones Sentiments, and how vexatious sometimes, when we find our selves incapable of doing it, since at this very Moment, as loaded as I

am with the Instances of Your Goodness, I perceive my self unable to testify the grateful Sense, which I entertain of them! It lies stifled under its own Excess, and whatever Efforts I make, I see my self necessitated to leave You to think, what I ought to have declar'd to all Mankind.

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*The Funeral ORATION of Messire Hardouin de Perefixe de Beaumont Archbishop of Paris, and one of the Forty of the French Academy, pronounced in 1671. At his Funeral Rites perform'd in the Name of that Company in the Church of Billettes, by Mr. Cassagnes Abbot.*

*He is a chosen Vessel unto me to bear my Name before the Gentiles and Kings, Acts ix. 15.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**T is not a Custom lately introduc'd to pay publick Honours to the Memory of Extraordinary Men. It has been a Maxim long ago receiv'd, that one ought to preserve the Remembrance of Eminent Virtues, after they have quitted the World; and it has like-

likewise been agreed, that one could not take a more favourable Opportunity of celebrating them, than those Moments of Affliction, when Panegyricks are no longer subject to the Attacks of Envy. And indeed, nothing has more the Appearance of Humanity and Reason, than to bewail our Friends after their Decease, to justify in a publick Manner the Tears, which we shed for them, and to seek our Consolation rather in applauding their Merit, than in forgetting their Loss.

Tho' no Other Reasons had prevail'd upon You, *Gentlemen*, to discharge these Funeral Offices to your Brethren, they would undoubtedly be allow'd to be Just; but You have much stronger to Assign, *viz.* The Certainty, which the Christian Religion affords us of the Immortality of our Souls, the Assurance which it gives us, that in losing those, who dye before us, we only lose Sight of them; that the End of this Life leads us into the Beginning of Another, that will have no End; that the Union of the Church is Indissoluble, Eternal, Independant of Time and Place.

Thus since Reason and Faith, Philosophy and Religion, Moral and Christian Virtues have laid you under an Obligation of paying a Regard to the Memory of *Messire Hardouin de Peresfixe de Beaumont* Archbishop of Paris,

and one of the Members of your Society, I am no ways surpris'd, that You have been desirous to acquit your selves of this Duty ; but surpris'd I am, that a Design so laudable has been attended with a Choice so inexcusable, and that having amongst your selves so many Men capable to undertake this Affair, you have employ'd the only one that is not so. You were Witnesses to the Reluctancy, with which I took this Charge upon me. I long resisted those Orders, which I have been accustom'd to observe as Laws, and being fill'd with a just Apprehension of Your Abilities, I represented to my self at that time, how dreadful it is to speak before an Audience compos'd of such Masters of Art, and Judges of Eloquence. Common Decency would require me, without doubt, to say nothing that is low and ordinary before Wits so far elevated above the Vulgar, and I find it impossible for me to entertain You with any thing New. For indeed what can I offer in this Place? If Reasonings, the Knowledge, wherein You have been educated, shews You Them in their very Principles. If Examples, You are as well acquainted as my self with those of your Brother-Member. If Authorities, all the weighty ones are very well known to You already ; Antiquity lies present to Your View, and besides might not Your own Works be produc'd



duc'd for an Authority? I am not animated by the Reflection, which was made by a Philosopher, that if all Men were as they ought to be, that is, if they were like You, Eloquence would be of no Use in the World, that then it would be sufficient to expose Truth in her naked State, and that we should give such a Turn to our Discourse, so as neither to do Prejudice to our Cause, nor to give it a false Varnish, but abstain from all Endeavours to Please the Audience, and avoid only what may give them Disgust.

But it is Time to wave all these Considerations, how just soever they may be. Let us remember, that this Undertaking is design'd to be rather an Action of Piety, than of Eloquence, since it is perform'd in the midst of the Celebration of those Mysteries, which the Church calls terrible. Let the Grandeur of the Sacrifice, the Presence of the Altar, and the Sanctity of the Gospel strike us with Reverence; and without making a profane Discourse upon a Christian Subject, let us consider the Rank, which this Prelate bore in Learning, and the Rank, which he bore in the Church. These Two Views, if I mistake not, will open to us a Way to look into the Bottom of his Encomiums, or at least to Survey the Extent of them. We shall see his Relation with the Prince,

and with the People. *He is a chosen Vessel unto me, to bear my Name before the Gentiles and Kings.* We shall distinguish in him the Three different Qualities of a Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, of a Member of the *Academy*, and of a Preacher, the Importance of his Employments, the Splendor of his Dignity, the Labours of his Ministry, and above all, not forgetting, what is particularly expected, we will regard him as Preceptor of the Greatest King upon Earth, and Archbishop of the first City in the Universe.

God, whom it is impossible to deny, and as impossible to comprehend, who is within and without the World, whom neither Heaven nor Earth contains, but who contains both the one, and the other, God, whose Ministers and Servants are all the Angels, whose Vicegerents and Subjects are all Kings, and whose Works are all Creatures in general, this Great God has no other End but Himself, and has created the World for his own Glory. \* *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* It is not then to contemplate the Sun, as a Philosopher formerly said, nor the Heavens, as Another imagin'd, that Man was plac'd upon Earth; it is not to confine his Meditations and his Thoughts

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\* Pro. xvi. 4.

within himself; it is not in short for any thing created, the Knowledge whereof could no more improve his Intellects, than the Possession of it could advance his Happiness, but it is for the Glory of God.

One of the Means, whereby we may attain this End, is the Study of Sciences. Some are of Service towards bringing us to the Knowledge of God, others towards bringing the rest of Mankind to the Knowledge of Him; and I see these Qualities happily united in our Illustrious Archbishop, who was at the same time one of the Members, or to speak more properly, one of the Ornaments of the *Sorbonne*, and the *Academy*. As a Divine, he knew the Perfections of God, as a Member of the *Academy*, he was capable of infusing the Knowledge of them into others; as a Divine, he resembl'd the Reservoir, which keeps Waters in Store, as a Member of the *Academy*, he resembl'd the Canal, which disperses them; as a Divine, he was like a Cloud, big with an immense Quantity of Rain, as a Member of the *Academy*, he was like the same Cloud, discharging its beneficial Showers to improve in us the Seeds of Virtue, and make us fruitful in Works of Piety and Repentance.

It is not perhaps without an especial Providence of God, that this Union was found in him, and that he was the Cement of these  
confi-

considerable Bodies, to let them see, that they ought not to propose to themselves Two different Ends, but joyn together in an holy League to instruct the World, to confound Error, and to oppose and overcome Iniquity.

There was formerly a continual Dispute manag'd betwixt Philosophers and Orators, which the Pride of *Paganism* had long kept up. The Orators pleaded, that the Philosophers abus'd their Understandings by too nice Subtilties, that they spent their Time in idle Contemplations, and were so many grievous Burdens to, or at least useless Members of the Republick. The Philosophers on the contrary maintain'd, that the Orators supported the Error of Vulgar Opinions, that they amus'd themselves with a vain Affectation of being expert in Language, and propos'd to themselves nothing more than to Colour over Things with the Appearance of Truth, and extort the Suffrages of the People by raising the Violence of their Passions. God forbid, that, under the Law of Charity, I should fancy to my self the like Division betwixt the *Sorbonne* and the ACADEMY. A Contention of this Nature would be the more liable to Censure, as even amongst the *Pagans* the wisest of them confess'd, that their Dispute was very ill-grounded, since neither of them could dis-  
pense



pense with each other ; that Man could never be a true Orator, unless he were a Philosopher, that is, unless he knew the Moral Part ; and that the Philosopher could not put Wisdom into an amiable Dress, unless he were an Orator, that is, unless he was skill'd in the Art of Speaking and Writing. Therefore *Pericles* was the Disciple of *Anaxagoras*, and *Demosthenes* of *Plato*, whose Eloquence has been admir'd in all Ages. But to be Ingenious, that eloquent \* Philosopher seems to condemn a Quality, of which he himself was possess'd. *St. Basile*, who was well acquainted with his Works, as well as the other Fathers of the Church, seems likewise after his Example to despise the Art of Oratory ; and to strengthen this Objection, *St. Paul* in his Divine Epistles makes a Thousand Attacks, and wages a Thousand Wars against Science, and Human Eloquence. However, since *Plato* in his Writings displays the Ornaments of Rhetorick, and sometimes even those of Poetry, since *St. Basile* has been so celebrated an Orator, that *Libanius*, a Chief Man of the Faculty, calls him the only Person, that had had the Talent of inspiring Life

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\* Plat in Gorg.

into his Discourses; since, in short, the incomparable Apostle produces Citations out of *Aratus*, *Epimenides*, and *Menander*, and expresses himself after so admirable a manner, that *St. Chrysostome*, the faithful Interpreter of his Thoughts, makes a Panegyrick upon his Eloquence in a Thousand Places; are there not Grounds to believe, that we are fallen into some Mistake about these Matters, that the Difficulty arises from an Equivocation, and that the Signification of the Words, which these Eminent Men have made use of, is not rightly understood. *Plato* and *St. Basile*, without any Dispute, in condemning Orators, mean only Sophisters; and *St. Paul* only opposes himself to Science and Eloquence, as he considers them on the side of Error, which has crept into them, on the side of Presumption, of Envy, of Obstinacy, of Opposition to Faith, and all the other Defects, which Men intermingle with them; Men, I say, who, by the Corruption of their Nature, turn Good into Evil, and make the Worst Use of the Best Things.

I thought my self oblig'd at first to enter upon this Method of Reasoning, to obviate the Objection of those, who will think it strange to find me commending an Archbishop for being a Member of the Academy; for the World has always had, and always will

will have, a Sett of Men, who employ all their Reason in opposing Reason it self, who labour the whole Course of their Lives under the first Prejudices, which they have imbib'd, and whose Understanding is so oddly turn'd, that You must eternally apologize with them for Things the most Innocent, the most Laudable, and the most Necessary.

Our Prelate then had just Reason to believe, that Theological Studies ought always to be attended with those of the Academy. He saw, that without this Method no solid Performance was to be attempted in Learning, because, if it be true, as it cannot be doubted, that all Arts in general, whether with Regard to the End of their Object, or to that of the Artificer, ought to have a Tendency to Morality, it is no less true, that Morality cannot be known in that Perfection, to which the Gospel has rais'd it, without the Assistance of Divinity; as, on the other hand, Divinity would lie buried in Obscurity, unless it borrow'd, somewhere or other, the Art of making it self intelligible to the People, and spreading its Influences in an advantageous manner upon all sorts of Capacities. The Wise *Prefixe* knew, that the Labours of a Christian Academy are of no small Service to the Conduct and Salvation of Souls. He knew, that the Evangelical Teachers ought to be arm'd with the  
Sword

Sword of the Word, as well as with the Shield of Faith. He remember'd, that one of the Chief Apostolick Men is stil'd in the \* Scripture an Eloquent Man; and that those Venerable Bishops of Antiquity were the most remarkable in their Time, not only for their Piety, and their Sanctity, but for their Learning, and their Eloquence.

Who can express the Zeal, with which his Learning inspir'd him, or the Degree, to which Learning was promoted by his Zeal? When he reflected upon the absolute Necessity, that the Church lay under of being Mistress of Polite Learning, in order to sanctify it by the Spirit of Charity, to consecrate it to the Defense of the Faith, to the Propagation of the Gospel, and by the means of it to raise Triumphal Arches in Honour of the Conquests and Victories of Jesus Christ? This is apparently so necessary, that nothing can be more.

I confess, *Gentlemen*, we are remov'd at a great Distance from the Commerce of Infidels, we live in the Brightness of Christianity, where the Church appears at this time to be the Mother of so many People, and the Queen of so many Sovereigns. Notwithstanding we see many Christians, whose

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\* Acts c. 18.



Faith is either already dead, or upon the Point of dying, who maintain Opinions contrary to the Mystery of the Cross, both in Practice and in Belief, and who have occasion to be converted, not only in respect of their Souls, but their Understandings; so that we must necessarily take up Arms to fight, we must cry out with the Prophet, *Sword, Sword, unsheath thy self for Slaughter, whet thy self, and look bright for Destruction.* May we not say, that the Power of Eloquence is more necessary, in these latter Times, than it was in the First Age of the Church? For then that great Effusion of the Spirit of God, which had been predicted by *Joel* \*, and by *Esaias* †, was fulfill'd; and those, who receiv'd the Baptism, receiv'd with this Sacrament the Gift of Healing, or the Spirit of Prophecy, or some other supernatural Excellency, which visibly rais'd the Disciples of Jesus Christ above the rest of the World, and serv'd as continual Proofs of the Truth of our Mysteries. Since God has left his Church destitute of these Miracles, we must supply the Want of them by a sufficient Fund of good Sense and Learning, by the Justification of the Prophecies, and

\* 2. 28.

† 44. 3.

the Scriptures, by the continued Lights of Ecclesiastical Tradition, in short, by the Manifestation of the Divine and Indissoluble Chain of our Eternal Truths.

To this let us add for the Glory of Learning, and for a powerful Motive to it, let us add, I say, the Grandeur, to which it is rais'd by Christianity. The Ancients did it an incredible Honour. Whenever one makes mention of *Scipio*, *Cæsar*, *Cato*, *Brutus*, and so many other celebrated *Romans*, we do not at first View consider them as Men of Wit or Learning; yet these were all Men of Letters, they were Philosophers, and Orators, who, after having made use of their Learning, and their Eloquence, in their Pleadings at the Barr, as Advocates, made use of them in the Army to animate their Forces, as Generals; to harangue the People, as Tribunes; and to declare their Opinion in the most August Assembly of the Earth, either as Consuls, or as Senators. All this has an Air of Greatness in the Opinion of Mankind. But it is such a Greatness, as does by no means come up to that, which Learning owes to Christianity. Let us judge of it by its Consequences. Neither the *Roman* Empire, nor the *Roman* Republick, subsist any longer. The *Scipio's*, and the *Cæsars* are perish'd in the Vanity of their Imaginations, whereas the Effects of  
Spiri-

Spiritual Labours will never die. The Souls, which Pious Doctors have led into, or preserv'd in the right Way, will return them immortal Thanks in their own Country, and the Advantages, which they have reap'd from their Discourse, or their Writings, will not only last as long as the World, but as long as Eternity it self.

The Prelate, whose Memory we are celebrating, was animated by these powerful Considerations. He knew, that a continual Application was necessary to acquire holy and solid Learning; he thought himself bound to use his utmost Efforts towards procuring, not the Titles of a Doctor, and a Member of the Academy, but the Qualities, which are requisite to obtain them; for the Church has Eminent Divines, which are not to be found in the Society of the *Sorbonne*, and *France* Excellent Men of Literature, which are not to be seen in the Academy, but whom the Academy would be glad to see amongst them. He was a Lover of Study, *Gentlemen*, he was a Lover of Study, which is Your Innocent Passion. As one of the best Expedients to Learn, is to take upon ones self the Trouble of Teaching, he taught a Course of Philosophy in the College of *Plessis*. He was not a Person of that unsettled Temper, as to look upon a Life of Solitude to be a Life of Captivity,

tivity, and Reading, or Composition, to be a Piece of Slavery. He made his Business his Pleasure, and having learn'd from one Prophet\*, that the Lips of the Priest keep Knowledge, and from Another†, that, whoever neglects the Acquisition of it, is excluded from the Priesthood by the Lord, he was willing to buy this Ornament, and this Support of his Profession, at the Price of his Labour.

But if He deserves Applause for following that noble Inclination, whilst he was at Liberty to pursue it, I do not think him less deserving of Commendation for devoting himself entirely to that Employ, whereunto Providence afterwards call'd him; for it is not to be conceiv'd, how many Persons of Learning, either entirely neglect, or not suitably improve the best Opportunities of being serviceable to the World, by their Inability to disengage themselves from the Charms of Curiosity, and to defend themselves against an intemperate Thirst after Learning.

You see, *Gentlemen*, how insensibly I am led to the most remarkable Passage of his Life. Let us not pass it by, without confi-

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\* Mal. 2.

† Agg. 4.



dering it attentively ; and to have a truer Conception of its Grandeur, let us remember, that the Law of Nature requires all Fathers to instruct their Children, and all Mothers to nurse them ; but as some Mothers are oblig'd to excuse themselves from the Discharge of this Duty, so there are Fathers, who being engag'd in Affairs of Consequence, and unwilling however to neglect the Education of their Children, with which God has bless'd them, apply themselves to Men of Abilities, proper to be employ'd in these Concerns, and to be entrusted with the tenderest Pledge of their Love, and the dearest Object of their Hopes. I am sensible, that our Archbishop, at that time Abbot of *Beaumont*, was not chosen to be His Majesty's Preceptor by the late King of Glorious Memory : He was nominated by *Ann of Austria*, a most Illustrious Queen, and Wise Regent ; but this no ways alters the Principle of Natural Right, which we have just laid down, and we may safely say, that the Preceptors of Kings Children represent the Persons of the Kings their Fathers in the Education of them ; and this Share, which is communicated to them of the Paternal and Royal Authority, stamps such a Mark of Honour upon them, that a Man of Learning cannot wish his Merit more gloriously rewarded. However, as

this Honour ought not to transport them so far, as to make them forget the dependent State, in which they are, and that they may demean themselves like Subjects, at the same time they act as Masters, it is necessary they should observe a certain Temperament, which perhaps is one of the most difficult Lessons in the World to be practis'd, because it obliges them to join Qualities of a different Nature, contrary one to another, and in some measure inconsistent, such as Severity and Sweetness, Authority and Respect, Complaisance and Resolution, the Power of Commanding, and the Duty of Obeying.

The Abbot *de Beaumont* seem'd born to preserve this Medium. He knew how to carry himself with the exactest Discretion; and had moreover a good Knowledge of the Court, and of the World, and an Air and Courtesy becoming his High Birth. Never had Man a more engaging Deportment; his Presence was both Comely and Majestick; and he was Master of all those Graces, which serve as an Introduction to Virtue.

I am persuaded, *Gentlemen*, You do not expect, that I should enter into the Particulars of that Care, Assiduity, and Application, which he underwent. And as in beholding a Tree loaded with Fruit, one  
cannot

cannot exactly judge, what Drops of Rain and Dew have been scatter'd upon it to make it spread, blossom, and bear Fruit : So neither is it possible to specify the peculiar Instructions, which in the Education of our King made the greatest Impression upon him, and animated the powerful Inclinations, which He discover'd from His Infancy for Heroick Virtues.

We this Day see Him one of the greatest Monarchs that ever Reign'd ; we see, that He understands and practises the Art of Governing ; that He takes upon Himself the Trouble of the Weightiest and Minuteest Affairs of Monarchy, and finds nothing either too high for His Capacity, or too low for His Concern ; that He has no Minister but Himself ; nor any Favourite but His People ; that *France* employs His Thoughts without exhausting them ; that He could govern, without any Assistance, the different Empires of the World ; that He imitates and excels the most finish'd Models ; that He gives His Royal Issue more Noble Examples than ever His Ancestors set Him ; and Persons the least interested in His Glory, if they do not give Him the Pre-eminence to all other Kings, are unanimous in their Opinion, that no King can claim the Pre-eminence of Him. All this we see, and are not insensible, who it was, that had the

Honour to be His Preceptor. True it is, that he found an happy Disposition to work upon, a truly great and magnanimous Soul, a firm and steady Courage, a vast and sublime Genius, which, without the Assistance of Education, was able to break thro', and dissipate all Clouds, to enlighten us with His Rays, and be a shining Star to the whole World. Herein consists the Happiness of our Prelate; but in this Happiness consists His Honour; and if there be a sort of good Fortune, which, according to the Testimony of an Ancient\*, has a Right to be brought into Panegyricks, it is without doubt that, of which we are at present speaking.

Alas! How comes it to pass, that the Life of the King should not add to the Glory of His Preceptor? It adds to Ours; here are some amongst us, who bear no other Relation to the Prince, but that of Subjects. Nevertheless we all of us value our selves upon our Sovereign; we esteem it an Honour to pay our Obedience to the Greatest King upon Earth; and there is no *French* Man, tho' residing in the remotest Kingdoms, that is not ready to maintain this Noble and Just Pride of ours in the Face of

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\* Cic. Or. b. 2.



Nations, and in the very Presence of other Monarchs. We may certainly say in this Case, that good Success produces Applause, as much as ill Success raises Censure. You know, *Gentlemen*, who the Prince was, whom *Seneca* had the Care of Educating, and it will be no difficult Matter to re-call to Mind those remarkable Words of the Philosopher\*, *Instead of being commended, He ought in Justice to be accus'd, that he did not soften the Disposition of Nero, but sharpen'd the Edge of his Cruelty.*

Is not *Seneca* very unfortunate? That He, who was the Glory of the Schools, who carried Morality as high as it was in the Power of Natural Reason to do, and in one of his Works has particularly recommended Clemency to the World, should be charg'd with having sharpen'd the Edge of *Nero's* Cruelty: What are we to understand by these Words? Did *Seneca* spirit him up to Wickedness? Did he instill into him barbarous and Blood-thirsty Principles? Did he furnish him with those deadly Instruments of Poison, Fire, and Sword? No, *Gentlemen*, this heavy Charge is not laid upon him, but he is charg'd with failing to represent to his Pupil in the strongest Terms,

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\* Ans,

that an Inhuman Prince is a Monster, that Goodness engages Love, and Love supports Empire, and that a Generous Soul, when plac'd upon the Throne, never orders the Infliction of any Punishment without just Grounds, and never orders the Infliction of any, tho' upon just Grounds, without Regret. And yet who knows, whether *Seneca* did not discharge his Trust? We have the more Reason to be of this Opinion, as the first Five Years of this Emperor's Reign were spent in so virtuous a manner, that they are said to deserve as much to be imitated, as the rest of his Life to be detested and abhorr'd by the whole World. However, tho' *Seneca* might perhaps take all the Pains requisite for such a Charge, and was so far from being an Accessary to *Nero's* Cruelties, that he was a Sufferer by them, yet this unhappy Philosopher has the Blame of all laid upon him; they have look'd upon him to be the Accomplice, as it were, of all his Villanies; they have form'd an Accusation against him, which has been transmitted to us thro' so many Ages; and fix'd such a Blemish upon his Reputation, as is never to be effac'd.

If then a bad Prince brings a Disgrace upon his Preceptor, why should not a good Prince reflect an Honour upon His? And since the Reign of our King is not stain'd with

with Blood, as those of other Sovereigns have been; since Anger is a Passion unknown to this Great Monarch; since He finds more Pleasure in granting Pardons, than the fiercest Spirits feel in executing their Revenge, and since he makes himself as much belov'd for His Goodness, as esteem'd for His Prudence, and dreaded for his Valour, does not He dart some Rays of His Glory upon his Preceptor? And are we not oblig'd to express our Gratitude to Him, who has cultivated those Seeds of Virtue, which Heaven implanted in this Heroick Breast?

Can we think, that when *Alexander* perform'd so many wonderful Exploits, when he took Towns, won Battles, shew'd himself indefatigable in Labour, and undaunted in Danger; can we think, I say, that those Old Commanders, who had serv'd in the Armies of King *Philip* his Father, did not frequently cast their Eye towards *Greece*, where *Aristotle* then dwelt, and repeat those Sentiments of Respect, which were due to that Philosopher, who had so happily instructed their Prince? In like manner, when our King in his Military Expeditions was the Life of his Army, and if I may be permitted to use the Expression, the Architect of his own Conquests; when He expos'd His Life as freely as His own Soldiers did  
Theirs,

Theirs, or rather distinguish'd Himself from them, only by exposing Himself more than They; when, after he had shew'd Himself by the Victories, which He gain'd, Master of all the Virtues of the Ancient Conquerors, He shew'd Himself by the Peace, which He made, free from all their Failings; that He had neither their Ambitious nor Violent Spirit; would it not have been reasonable once at least to found the Name of His Preceptor in the Acclamations of his Triumph? If we have forgot to do him this Honour in his Life-time, let us repair the Injury after his Death. But tho' we should fail to acquit our selves handsomely in this Point, Posterity never will; and out of the many Histories, which shall Record the Reign of *Lewis* the XIVth, not one will omit to observe, that *Hardouin de Perefixe* was His Preceptor, and by that single Word draw the Veneration of the whole World upon this Prelate.

*Antoninus* the Emperor did advance to the Honour of a Consul the Person who had instructed him in the Rudiments of Learning, and who was a celebrated Orator, tho' his Works are lost. *Gratian* the Emperor, was as Grateful to *Ausonius*, so much renown'd for his Poetry. Others there are, who have procur'd the highest Dignity in the Church for those, who had the Care of their Education; upon which our Prince  
has



has declar'd, that he would have been as eminently Gracious to His own Preceptor, as ever *Charles* the Vth was to His. Such a Thought as this, most August Monarch, is worthy to be entertain'd by so Generous a Spirit: But tho' Your Desires in this Point, should have been accomplish'd, Your Actions would always have been the greatest Favour You could possibly have oblig'd him with: Your Life, Your Life it self would have been the highest Honour, to which You could have advanc'd him; He would not only have enjoy'd more Pleasure, but more Renown, to have seen You Reign so Triumphantly, than to have worn a Diadem upon his Head; and the Glory, which the Brightness of Yours reflects upon him, is of so transcendent a Nature, that it cannot be exceeded by any, but That, which He possesses in Heaven.

It is impossible to express the Raptures and Transports, which he felt upon beholding the Illustrious Actions of his Royal Pupil. He was not one of those Ambitious Men, who have no other View, than their own Interest, and are Lovers of nothing but Themselves. For his Part, he lov'd the Church, he lov'd the King, he had the Heart of a Christian, and the Heart of a *Frenchman*, he practic'd that Precept, *Fear God, Honour the King*. He valued the Honour

nour it self, which he possess'd, above all the Advantages, which attended it ; he was sensible of the Happiness of his Fortune in having infus'd the Knowledge of God into One, who of all the Princes in the World is the liveliest Image of Him, and in having been nominated the first Preacher to a Most Christian King. *He is a chosen Vessel to me to bear my Name before Kings.* Yes, without doubt, we may affirm, that the Preceptors of Kings are their first Preachers, as Preachers are the Preceptors of the People, so that these two Qualities being united in *Messire Hardouin de Peresfixe*, I must in the next Place consider him with respect to his preaching Faculty, and I think my self the more obliged to this, as the Conjunction of the Qualifications of a Preacher, and of a Member of the *Academy*, seem in this Place very necessary: *He is a chosen Vessel unto me to bear my Name before the Gentiles.*

I am sensible, that I speak before Gentlemen, who are not to be mov'd by any Exaggerations, and who know how to lower the Value of a Thing, when any pretend to enhance it beyond its due Measure. You need not to Fear, that I shall abandon my self to rash Hyperboles, that I shall offer to disguise the Truth, as if You were ignorant of it, or that, through an indiscreet Excess, too much practic'd on these Occasions,

Occasions, I shall observe a Method, which I have heard You so frequently condemn ; but on the other Hand it is not reasonable, that, whilst I avoid to give our Brother the Commendations, which do not belong to him, I should deprive him of those, which really do. The Desire, which I have to keep a just Medium, engages me in a Reflection, which I beg you to make with me.

After the Apostles, from whose inspir'd Writings we can draw no Consequence, as they come not within the common Rules, the ablest Preacher upon Earth, in my Opinion, was *St. Chrysostome* ; and I have long ago thought, that two Geniuses were never more alike, than this Ecclesiastical Father, and the *Roman* Orator : So that if *St. Chrysostome* had been call'd to the Bar at *Rome*, he would have shewn as much Art in Pleading as *Cicero*, and if *Cicero* had been seated in the Chair of *Antioch*, or *Constantinople*, he would have discover'd as happy a Talent in Preaching, as *St. Chrysostome*. Tho' these two Men may be reckon'd Prodigies, the one for profane, the other for sacred Eloquence ; and tho' so many Ages have past without producing any one, that has equalled them, may we not say, *Gentlemen*, that we conceive within our selves a much higher Notion of Perfection, than that

Degree

Degree of Excellence, to which they arriv'd? It is no ways to be denied, *Cicero* himself has acknowledged it with regard to *Demosthenes*, whom he had chosen for his Model, and of whom he was a perpetual Admirer; and some *Romans* there were in *Cicero's* time, who, however charm'd with his Eloquence, could have wish'd to have seen something, (what shall I call it?) something more Concise, more Full, and more Nervous. Very many to this Day make the same Remarks upon *St. Chrysostome*, they find in him neither Blemish nor Fault, but a certain Interval betwixt Him and Perfection. And indeed we may well imagine, that he would have had a better Faculty at Preaching, if to his wonderful Easiness of Expression, his inexhaustible Stock of Invention, and his Reasonings always Wise, always Solid, always Persuasive, he had added the Strength of *St. Basile*, the Penetration of *St. Augustine*, and the Learning of *St. Jerome*. This Idea, I confess, has never yet been exemplified in any living Instance, it has not, and probably never will. However it is no chimerical Fancy, it is grounded upon the Nature of Things. It is not impossible with God to form a perfect Creature, and if Heaven does not think fit to bless the World with any so Accomplish'd, it is assuredly with a Design to mortify the Pride of Man, by supplying him



him with Understanding enough to know Perfection, without the Power of attaining it.

Now to what does all this Reasoning tend? I would give You to understand by this, *Gentlemen*, that as we do not fail to admire *Cicero* and *St. Chrysostome*, tho' they may not have altogether reach'd that Idea of Perfection, which we have conceiv'd, so we ought not to deny a Share of our Esteem and Applause to those, who have deservedly the Reputation of Eloquent Men, tho' they fall short of the Abilities and Glory of those two incomparable Geniuses. If the Ancients had not judg'd in this manner, we should have found no mention made of any *Grecian* Orator, except *Demosthenes*. He would have entirely suppress'd the Reputation of his Rival, when he gain'd the Advantage of him in that famous Cause, wherein they oppos'd each other, and we should have been entire Strangers to *Æschines*, *Demades*, *Hyperides*, and that *Lycias*, so much recommended for the Sweetness and Elegance of his Style. We are much more oblig'd to observe this Equity in the several Degrees of Learning, for I do not know, whether it would have been much to the disadvantage of the Republick of *Athens* to have had no other Orator than *Demosthenes*, but I am sure, that it would be a most deplorable

plorable Misfortune to the Church, were it reduc'd to the Condition of having only one Preacher. Alas! what would become of so many People, who could not have had the Benefit of any Instruction? What would have been the Fate of an infinite Number of Souls, which would have wanted Guides to lead them into the Way of Salvation? Let us then banish from us that supercilious Nicety, that odious Malignity, which would annihilate whatever has not an Excellence superior to every thing, which thinks, or at least pretends to think, that there is no Place of Honour below the First. Without doubt, there is, \* *It is honourable to stand in the Second or Third Rank*, and one of those honourable Posts we must assign to him, whose Loss we are regretting.

This is at least the Opinion, which I have conceiv'd of him upon the Perusal of his Sermons. I have seen the best part of them, which by good Fortune fell into my Hands. I have found in them a true and sound Doctrine, a solid and judicious Style, a wise distribution of holy Matter, of Ecclesiastical Knowledge, a Method proper to instruct and edify. Without the Noise of a Thunder-clap, he produc'd the Effects

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\* *Cic. Ora.*

of it, by beating down every Obstacle, or as the \*Apostle terms it, every high thing, that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God. He shew'd, that Softness of Expression has as forcible an Influence as Power it self, or to speak more properly, he shew'd, that Power is not always accompanied with Noise or Violence. He never made use of the largest, the most visible, or the most founding Engines of Eloquence ; but had the Skill to touch the finest, the smallest, and the most delicate Springs of it. He was not one of those Torrents, that by their Inundations overrun Countries, and will not be contain'd within any Banks ; he was not, if you please, one of those Rivers, that fill a vast Channel, and extend themselves to a great Length. He was a Fountain, a clear and pure Fountain, from whence wholesome Waters might be drawn. He was follow'd, tho' not perhaps with a restless Impatience, yet with the closest Diligence ; he was heard without any Pain, whenever he spoke, and whatever he said, gave Satisfaction. He chose to enlighten rather than to dazle, to move than to please, and to contend rather for Victory, than Triumph. He imitated the Murmuring of the Dove, rather than

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\* 2 Cor. 10.

the Roring of the Lyon. He was not ashamed of the Simplicity of the Gospel, a Simplicity infinitely more Majestick, than all human Pomp and Magnificence. He was not one of those, whose Thoughts are employ'd upon preaching themselves, when they preach Jesus Christ. He never mix'd the Fumes of worldly Vanity with the Uction of the Spirit of God. He never turn'd out of the Way of Truth to run after Phantoms. He appear'd a Vessel really *chosen of the Lord to bear his Name before Gentiles and Kings*. He shew'd himself always Master of his own Reason, and always Master of other Men's, so as to bring them under Captivity to the Faith, to which he was himself a Captive, whilst on every Occasion there shone forth a Ray of Judgment and good Sense, which are indeed the Gifts of Nature, but such as Grace pre-supposes to be found in the Professors of this Ministry. Shall I give you in one Word my Opinion of his Sermons? They seem to me to be so well digested, that I could wish, that all Preachers perform'd in the same Manner. The Church would receive considerable Advantage by it, as by this Means it would be freed from an infinite Number of inconsiderate Creatures, who embrace that Profession without any Call to it, either from God, or Man, or any Excellencies either of Grace

or



or Nature, in short, without any thing but a presumptuous Rashness. They are frequently unacquainted with all sorts of Learning. Far from having Abilities enough to teach, they want oftentimes a Capacity to learn, and are perfect Strangers to Morality, the Concerns of the Church, and Religion it self. And how can it be otherwise? They never apply themselves in the least to Study, the common Channel, whereby God thinks fit to convey Knowledge to the World; they have not read the very Titles of the most common Writings of the Fathers; they never put themselves to the trouble of fetching Ecclesiastical Knowledge from the Sources, which God and his Prophets, Jesus Christ and his Apostles have left us; and, without the support of any Foundation, they make our Lord suffer afresh by their Discourses. They dally, I say, with the Patience of a Christian Auditory, and tantalize the Souls, that hunger and thirst after Righteousness. But if such Men as these dare expose themselves in *Paris*, the Eye of all the World, how many of this sort may we suppose there are in the Towns of the Provinces, and in the Country Villages; and have we not Grounds to apprehend, that a vast Number of the like Insults are There committed upon the Dignity of God's Word.

What a Misfortune is this to the Church! and is there no Way to remove it? The Remedy, which our Archbishop propos'd to apply, was to prepare solid and instructive Discourses for the whole Christian Year, to distribute them in Print throughout all the Places of his Diocess, and to enjoin the Pastors subordinate to him to pronounce them without any Alteration, or if they could not learn them by Heart, to read them in the Parish Churches before the Congregation of the Faithful. This Scheme of his I have had the Honour to receive from his own Mouth. An excellent Project, a wholesome and admirable Regulation, and such a Thought, if I am not misinform'd, as has been likewise entertain'd by other Prelates, who propose by this Method to preserve the Uniformity of Doctrine, to give Assistance to Infirmary, and a Check to Rashness, to prevent the Errors, and humble the Pride of Impiety, that would take Advantage from the Ignorance of those, who discredit the Ministry, to draw Religion it self into Contempt.

But it might not perhaps be judg'd so proper to lay this severe Restraint upon those bright and happy Geniuses, which the Church applys so usefully to its Service, and if the Expression may be allow'd, to clip the Wings of those Eagles, who can soar aloft without

without incurring the Imputation of Rashness, and may be left to their Strength without any Fear of being left by it. For such Persons as these, *Gentlemen*, our Prelate had mark'd out Rules, and put a Method in Practice, whereby he follow'd the Spirit and Example of *St. Charles*, who having consider'd, that amongst so many Works of the Fathers, there are none, that can supply the Place of a Christian Rhetorick, resolv'd upon having the Work attempted, and accordingly engag'd a Bishop of *Italy* in it. We have the Book at this time amongst us under the Title of the *Ecclesiastical Rhetorick*. It were to be wish'd, that the Execution of it had been as happy, as the Enterprize was laudable, but as the common Order and ancient Division is there observ'd in too servile a manner, and besides that nothing is therein treated in its full Latitude, it cannot be of any great Use, and is scarce to be valued for any thing, but its good Intention.

Methinks, *Gentlemen*, Providence has reserv'd this Work for You, I can safely say, that You are able to undertake it, I will take the Liberty to say, that you ought to do it, and permit me to say, that You design it.

Without doubt You intend it, since Rhetorick is one of those noble Projects, which were laid at the Beginning of your Institution. It will neither be difficult nor necessary to enlarge upon the Eloquence of the Barr, which has been so thoroughly discuss'd by the Ancients, the greatest part of their Books of Oratory treating of the Judicial Kind, and as they had a profound Judgment equal to their profound Learning, they have exhausted that Subject in their Treatises upon it. But it is the Christian Eloquence, which they have not touch'd upon, as they were Strangers to it ; there it is, where we must lay out our full Strength, where we must build upon a Model never before imagin'd, where we must open a Way to come to the Discovery of a New World. One single Person, let his Application be never so great, can never bring this Work to any Perfection. Pursue therefore unanimously so worthy and so noble a Design, overcome by Your Perseverance the Difficulties, that will offer themselves in this laborious Enterprise, make this Present to Christianity, whose infinite Advantage is concern'd in it, make it, I say, this Present, not only in Your own Language, but in that of the Church, and receive for Your Pains both the Blessings of Heaven and Earth. If you finish this Work, which has been much desired



fired by Your Illustrious Brother, he will hear of its Execution in the midst of his Glory, he will acknowledge himself eternally oblig'd to You for it; and if any thing can be an Addition to Sovereign Felicity, he will find an Encrease of Happiness in seeing, tho' after his Decease, the Accomplishment of his Wish.

But let not the World imagine, that ever he spent his Time, as many Christians do, in fruitless Wishes. He has set his Hand to the Work, he has discharg'd his Part, he has labour'd in Quality of Archbishop of *Paris*, and both in this great City, and in the other Parts of his Diocess, he has been so diligent, that his Actions would furnish Matter for a distinct Volume, an Account whereof I shall lay before You, after having begg'd one Moment to recover my Spirits.

It is not with Prelates, as it is with the Princes of the Earth, who maintain the Force of human Laws by the Terror of Temporal Punishments. But tho' Bishops should be invested with that sort of Power, they ought always to pursue other Views than those of Policy, whose chief Aim is to establish Peace and Safety in Kingdoms, and to prevent Acts of Treason or Violence; never any Way concerning it self, whether Men entertain ill Thoughts, whether they

envy the Prosperity of their Neighbour, or rejoice in the Destruction of their Brethren. Since the Gospel teaches us, that evil Thoughts are as criminal in the Sight of God, as evil Actions, it is not sufficient to restrain the Bad, They must be converted; it is not sufficient to deprive them of the Power to commit any Wickedness, They must be depriv'd of the very Will to do it; it is not sufficient to tye their Hands by Fear, Their Hearts must be chang'd by Love; in fine, it is not sufficient to bring them to be like good Men, They must be brought to Be good Men themselves.

This kind of Reasoning may convince us, what a large Share of Zeal, Charity, Courage, Industry, and Vigilance is requir'd in Bishops. Vigilance is in a peculiar manner essential to their Function; *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock, over the which the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood* \*. Whoever names a Bishop, means an Overseer, as when we talk of a Pilot, we are understood to talk of a Man, that Steers the Ship effectually, that has his Hand upon the Helm, and his Eye upon the Compass, and never abandons

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\* Acts xx. 28.

the Charge of his Vessel to the Passengers or Seamen, for fear of abandoning it to the Fury of the Winds and Storms. Thus, when we speak of a Bishop, we are understood to speak of a Christian, who interests himself in the Salvation of the Faithful, as well as in his own, who labours after the Sanctification of the Church, and never leaves the Conduct of it to indifferent or mercenary Strangers, for fear of leaving it in the Power of Raving Wolves, and at the Mercy of that Roaring Lion, who, according to St. Peter's Expression, is continually going about seeking whom he may devour.

Our Archbishop, thoroughly persuaded of, or rather deeply affected with this Fundamental Truth, apply'd himself to the Exercises of His Ministry; he made his Duty his principal Business, he made it his whole Concern; he buried himself, if I may be allow'd to use the Expression, in the Functions of a Bishop, which are comprehended under the Two Heads of Residence and Visitation.

I see very well, that it would be no Addition to His Character, to say, that he made his Residence in *Paris*, if we are understood to mean nothing more than a simple Abode, neither do I offer to bestow any Encomiums upon him, because he took up his Habitation in the Capital City of the  
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Chief Kingdom of the World, but because There he continually watch'd, like an Evangelical Shepherd, in the midst of his numberless Flock. † *I will stand upon my Watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will watch to see.*

You have seen him, *Gentlemen*, publicly offer to our Heavenly Father the Sacrifice of the Lamb without Spot, You have seen him assist at the Consort of Divine Hymns, and at the Delivery of Christian Truths, and afterwards bless his People by the Elevation of the adorable Victim, You have seen him appear in the Sacred Solemnities, at the Head of the Worshippers of the Living God, who receiv'd a sensible Satisfaction in observing, that the LORD, who is in a particular manner present in the Temple, was There serv'd with an holy Magnificence.

Besides, You are not unacquainted with his strenuous Efforts for supporting the Rights of his See, You are sensible, that he accomplish'd Things, which many Ages had wish'd to see, without the least Prospect of seeing them, and that having always added the Resolution, which is requisite for the Attempt of noble Enterprises,

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† Hab. 2. 1.



to the Constancy, which is necessary for the Execution of them; he met with Successes very advantageous to the Order of the Hierarchy, whereby he will oblige his Successors to preserve the Memory of his Pontificate in perpetual Veneration.

But his greatest Burden lies not here. It lies in that infinite Correspondence, which an Archbishop of *Paris* is oblig'd to maintain, it lies in that inconceivable Multitude and Variety of Cares, in those numberless Concerns, wherein he must engage himself, the very Imagination whereof strikes me with Horror; so that I am not afraid to say, that he sunk under the Weight of them, I may justly say, that he impair'd his Health, and shorten'd his Days by them, that he lay oppress'd under the warm Efforts of his Charity, that he sacrific'd himself as a Victim to his Zeal, and finish'd his Life sooner than Nature would have requir'd it, had he not given himself up to a Way of Life so laborious and so painful. If we desire to bewail our Misfortune in this respect, we may, but let us take care how we lament him, who dy'd under the Banners of *Jesus Christ*. Happy is the Man, who ends his Life in this manner; happy is the Man, who has fought the good Fight, and receives a Crown for it in the Kingdom of Heaven! Whilst he possess'd his Dignity, he was perhaps  
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Envi'd, and now he is Lamented: Whereas the quite contrary Sentiments are the true Effects of Piety; for now it is, that we ought to conceive an holy Jealousy of his Happiness, and an holy Emulation of his Virtue; and then it was, we should have bewail'd him, then we should have pitied him, when he groan'd under the Weight of that Burden, which Human Strength seems to be unable to sustain.

And certainly, *Gentlemen*, this City, wherein we live, which *Julian* in his Time call'd a little City, has since enlarg'd its Boundaries to such a Vast Extent, that It composes Alone the largest Diocess in the World: And as *St. Bernard* calls Episcopacy, a Burden to be dreaded by the Angels themselves, I shall almost venture to say, that were an Angel to leave Heaven, and take upon him the Direction of Spiritual Concerns in *Paris*, he could not there acquit himself of the Obligations of a Pastor in all the Rigour and Strictness of the Canons. For what Man, what Angel can provide for the Duties of so superior a Charge, for the different Necessities of so vast a Number of Souls, the Remedies and Preservatives against so many Evils, the Regulation of so many Parishes, Seminaries, Hospitals, and Communities, for the Consolation of so many Poor, the Correction of so

so many Sinners, the Edification of so many good Men, in short, for the Conduct of so many Christians, with which this great City is inhabited.

It is undeniably true, that there is no Place in the World, where so much Good and Evil is committed as in *Paris*; there is no Place, where *Jesus Christ* is at the same time so much glorified, and so much offended, where he has more sincere Worshipers, and more rebellious Subjects, and prouder Enemies; where he sees more Souls devoted to his Service, that do his Will, as it is done in Heaven; and more Hearts alienated from his Love, that blaspheme his Name as it is blasphem'd in Hell; and this surprising Mixture of so many Notorious Crimes, and so many Eminent Virtues, of so many shining Examples, and so many gross Offences, seems experimentally to contradict the Sentiment of an holy Father, who has express'd himself in this manner. \* *As there are but few, who are eminently Pious, so there are but few, who are abandonedly Wicked.*

The faithful *Perefixe*, chosen by the Lord to bear his Name before so vast a Number of Good and Bad Christians, became a Fellow-worker of Grace, to perfect it in some,

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\* August.

and

and to restore it in others; in some to finish the Spiritual Building, in others to repair its Ruins; he spar'd neither Prayers nor Pains to deliver the Slaves of Satan from Bondage, and to preserve the Children of God in a State of Liberty. He employ'd all Methods to hinder the Stars of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the Church, from falling into the lowest Pit, and to bring back from the Gates of Hell those miserable Souls, that sleep on without Fear, and run blindly upon the Brink of so frightful a Precipice.

It is true, that he was not without Persons to second his Zeal, he had excellent Assistants, enlighten'd Pastors, who were skill'd in that Art of Arts, that Science of Sciences, which *St. Gregory* mentions. But has a General of an Army no Care upon him, because he has experienc'd Officers under him? Is he not oblig'd to keep a watchful Eye upon Them, as well as upon the rest of his Troops? Is it not his Duty to give Orders, and his Business to see the Execution of them? And may we not truly affirm, that he shares the greatest Part of the Fatigue, as well as of the Honour?

With a Resolution to instruct his Clergy, to animate that holy Legion of Priests, list-ed under his Conduct in the Spiritual Warfare, he assembled them in Synods, he taught them, in what manner the People were to be



he taught, he represented to them, how much the Order of Priesthood engages them to adhere closely to God, and sit loosely to the World ; he open'd to them his Heart inflam'd with Charity ; he communicated to them the noble Designs, and tender Sentiments of his Fatherly Care ; he conjur'd them in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, and of his Church, to stand firmly by him, to join their Labours with His, to assist him towards sustaining the heavy Burthen, which by his Vocation he was oblig'd to undergo, and to prepare for him the Ways of the Lord, before he came to the Visitation of his Diocess.

What shall I say of that Visitation, which he made with so much Diligence, which he look'd upon as the most important Duty of his Office, and which was not less necessary, than are Missions into the Country of Infidels. Indeed, *Gentlemen*, one need not always look for *Canada* in *America* ; it is to be found in Old as well as New *France* ; it is to be found in the Villages adjoining to stately Cities. Let them try the Experiment, and they will find Men, who, whenever catechis'd, shall return as wild Answers, as the most barbarous *Indians*.

† *Having the Understanding darken'd, being*

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† Eph. 4. 18.

*alienated from the Life of God thro' the Ignorance that is in them.* They will find Men, who are not acquainted with the Creed or Lord's Prayer, who know not God, or only know him to offend him, who add Malice to Ignorance, Pride to Brutality, who live like Devils, and die like Beasts. Must not we therefore employ our selves in cultivating those waste Tracts of Land, which lie in the Field of the Church? Must we not use our utmost Efforts to extirpate those Briars and Thorns, which disgrace the Lord's Vineyard? Without doubt we must, and in this we shall only follow the Example of our Prelate. He never forbore to visit even the most inconsiderable Places in his Diocess; the Country-men have a lively and valuable Sense of his Memory; they mention him with Pleasure, and out of the Abundance of their Heart; and hereby shew, that they made a right Use of his Labours, *that they receiv'd the Word of God with all readiness of Mind\**, and that Jesus Christ confers a particular Blessing upon Episcopal Visitations.

Why cannot I enumerate the Particulars, which upon that Occasion he either order'd to be executed, or put in Execution himself?

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\* Acts 17. 11.

In one place he inspir'd a Minister with Zeal, who before led a Life of Indolence, and look'd upon his Sacred Profession as an Azylum of Repose and Idleness; in another place he supported the Courage of a laborious and well designing Minister, who groaning under the continual Persecution of Envious and Malicious Men, was determin'd to resign his Care of Souls. In this Place he brought publick Offenders to do exemplary Penance, in another he brought secret Sinners, who conceal'd the Actions of their Life even at the Chair of Confession, no longer to skreen themselves under that impious Silence. Here he administer'd the Bread of the Word, there the Bread of Life. Here he regulated the Government of an Hospital, there the Work of a Parish. Here he gave Orders for finishing the Building of a Church, there the Cloyster of a Monastery. Here he abolish'd a Superstitious Custom, there he introduc'd a Discipline conformable to the Rules of the Gospel. In one Part he put a Stop to a Dispute in Law, which would have kept up an eternal Difference betwixt Families, in another Part he made up a Quarrel, which would have produc'd Revenge and Murder. In one Place he prevented a Father and Mother from doing Violence to their Child, in compelling him to embrace a Religious Life without

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any Call from Heaven. In another he prevented a Father and Mother from exercising a Tyranny of a different Nature, in detaining a Child with them, (whom they cherish'd with the Tendernefs of Flesh and Blood) and in refifting his Inclinations to purfue his true Calling. He undeceiv'd fome, who believ'd Ufury to be no Fault. He difabus'd others, who judg'd Habitual Sins to be Venial. He open'd the Eyes of fuch Christians, as imagin'd, that their Ignorance of the Evangelical Precepts would fecure their Confcienccs, and bear them harmlefs. *He is a chofen Veffel to me, to bear my Name before the Nations and Kings.* In fome Places he fhew'd, that an Evil Action does not ceafe to be Evil, tho' it be done with a good Intention, and a Good one ceafes to be fo, when it ferves to promote an ill Defign. In other Places he clearly demonftrated, that the Celebration of the Lord's Day does not confift in Idlenefs, in Sports, and in Dances, but in the Exercife of Prayer, and in the Practice of Virtue. There are other Places, where, after he instructed the Faithful, in what manner they ought to prepare themfelves, before they receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, he has given them that ftrengthening Sacrament, whereby they might be enabled to behave themfelves like Valiant Soldiers under



der the Banners of Jesus Christ, and be animated to defend themselves with Vigour against the Enemies of their Salvation, whether visible or invifible. But who could exhaust the Praises of an Epifcopal Vifitation, whereof Faith and Zeal are the Guides, Knowledge and Charity the Companions, Courage and Labour the Executors? What Wit, what Memory could touch upon every fingle Passage in this Apoftolick Expedition, where fo many Conquefts are made, fo many Battels are won, fo many Palms and Laurels gather'd? It is an holy Work, wherein an infinite Number of others is comprehended; It is rather Matter for an History than a Sermon; it ought rather to be the Subject of a Thoufand, than of One Panegyrick.

Here, *Gentlemen*, I confeſs, that if I was mentioning a Biſhop, who had done all theſe Things in a Place, and at a Time, far diſtant from our Age and Country, it would be a conſiderable Embellifhment to my Diſcourſe. Then could I follow Step by Step all the Tracts of his Virtue; I could mark the ſeveral Stations of his Evangelical Voyage; there would be no Hamlet ſo inconfiderable, but the Name of it would found with an Air of Dignity; the ſmalleſt River would carry more Majeſty with it than the *Seine*; and that favourable Di-

stance of Time would afford as much Pleasure to the Imagination, as Perspectives give to the Eyes. But have I forgot what I advanc'd at the Entrance upon this Discourse, that you do not form that Judgment of Things, which the Vulgar do? You measure Actions by themselves; Artifice can gain nothing upon You, any more than Simplicity can lose any thing with you; You know, that all the Regions of the Earth are at an equal Distance from Heaven; and that the Works, which have been done in our Days, upon the Banks of the *Seine*, are not less Acceptable to God, provided they be equally holy, than those, which were formerly done upon the Banks of *Nile* or *Jordan*.

You do not therefore admire our Prelate the less for it, and You will admire him much more, when You recollect with Yourself, how liberal he was in the Distribution of His Temporal as well as Spiritual Charities, the latter of which were made more effectual by being accompanied with the former.

Sometimes he relieves a Family, that by an unlucky Turn of Fortune was reduc'd to very deplorable Circumstances, at other times he prevents one from falling into the like Misfortunes. Sometimes he administers Comfort to a Prisoner, who lying under

der the Pressure of Necessity, and the Menaces of Justice, had abandon'd himself to Despair, and was determin'd to prevent two forc'd Deaths by a voluntary one. At other times he conveys to a languishing sick Man the Hopes of His Cure, by furnishing him with proper Means for his Recovery. Sometimes he soothes the Melancholy of an unhappy Mother, who, after she has been Deliver'd, finds her self oblig'd to maintain her Child, at the same time that she has not wherewithal to support her self. At other times he assists those Children, who go under the Denomination of Foundlings, and from the first Moment of their Life are abandon'd by those, from whom they had just receiv'd it, and are infinitely more miserable than Orphans themselves.

This last Particular brings to my Mind a Relation, which I have heard of a Good Sort of Woman, who went to implore his Charity toward the Relief of those unfortunate Infants, at a time when he was not provided with any Money, however he order'd a Service of his Plate to be sold, and the Price of it to be consecrated to these Charitable Acts, so highly necessary, and so Acceptable to God.

The Missionary Preachers have assur'd me, that they receiv'd from him at one time no less than Ten Thousand Livres for the

Support of their Seminary ; and according to the Computation, which has been made, he distributed Ten Thousand Crowns of his Revenue every Year to the Poor.

There passes not a Day, wherein some Discovery or other is not made of the good Works, which he endeavour'd to do in secret, and only in the Presence of his Heavenly Father ; and I cannot determine, wherein he is most to be commended, whether for performing those Offices, or for concealing them ; whether for His Charity, or his Humility ; whether for employing his Ecclesiastical Revenues to relieve the Necessities of the Poor, whose Patrimony they are, or for not employing his Income to erect Trophies of Ostentation.

Most Charitable and Humble Prelate : Your Virtues have exceeded common Fame. Though we always profess'd a very high Esteem for You, we never paid You the Veneration You deserv'd. However, we make a solemn Reparation to Your Memory, and at the same time that God admits You to be a Partaker of Eternal Glory in Heaven, we think our selves oblig'd to offer You That, which we contribute upon Earth. You have not abandon'd Your Self to the Sollicitations of Vanity, You have overcome that Vice as well as others, which, like so many



many subdu'd Enemies, or enslav'd Captives, follow the Triumph of Your Virtue.

In the Practice of so many Christian Duties, in the Pursuit of so many good Intentions, in the midst of his very Zeal and Vigour, he was snatch'd away from our Desires, and Expectations, and the Church of *Paris* his Spouse, who pleas'd her self with the Thoughts of enjoying him a long time, has only possess'd him a few Years.

But how suitable was his Death to his Life! how Godly and Christian like! There were a Thousand Witnesses of it, and all of them edify'd by his Piety. They saw him receive the sacred Viaticum with a lively Faith. They heard him repeat with a Dying Accent the Prayers, which were offer'd up for him in his Agony. They heard him in his last Moments express himself in those moving Words, *I see no longer, but I hear still, talk to me continually of God.* They saw him expire, whilst he kiss'd the Cross of *Jesus Christ*, and humbly resign his Soul into the Hands of Him, whose Work it is in the Order both of Nature, and of Grace, and whose Temple it will for ever be in the Kingdom of Glory.

He is dead, that Man, in whom Merit and Dignity were united, Archbishop of a City, which is the Epitome of the World, a vigilant and faithful Pastor of Souls, a

truly Apostolick Preacher, Preceptor to a King, who is the inimitable Model of all Kings, Doctor of the most celebrated Faculty upon Earth, and a Member of the Academy, whose Name did Honour to Your Illustrious Society.

Could You have said, *Gentlemen*, could You have imagin'd before his last Illness, which was so sudden, and so short, that He would have been the first of Your Members, for whom this Office should be perform'd? He enjoy'd, at least in Appearance, a very good State of Health; he was not advanc'd very far in Years; there are some amongst You less Healthful, and more Ancient: But Death has no Respect either to Health, or to Age, or to Fortune, or to Merit, or to Friendship, or to Vows, or Prayers. She only hearkens to the Voice of the Lord, and whenever He commands to give the Blow, she immediately executes the fatal Sentence, which was long ago pronounc'd against the whole Race of Mankind. We ought therefore always to be prepar'd against the like Accidents. But I perceive that the World is much surpris'd at his Death. They will shortly be surpris'd at that of Another, and of Another after that; our whole Lives pass away in a continued Course of Wondring and Amazement; and yet we apply nothing of these Cases

Cases to our selves, we take no Resolution to reform our Manners, we receive no Advantages from these many Warnings, which God is pleas'd to send us for our Salvation.

*\* I have sent amongst you the Pestilence after the manner of Ægypt, yet have ye not return'd unto me, saith the Lord.*

Incidents of this Kind are not apt to strike You with so much Astonishment, as they do the Vulgar. Your Studies make Death a familiar Object to You. History furnishes You with various Examples of it; Philosophy, which is sometimes term'd a Meditation upon Death, treats of it in its most ordinary Discourses, and Christian Morality, which regards it as an Instant Decisive of Eternity, turns all its Reflections upon it, and proposes it incessantly to our Thoughts. It is impossible, but You must regulate Your Life by it: otherwise, *Gentlemen*, what solid Advantage would arise from the Profession of Learning? What Fruit could we expect to reap from our Studies? And to what purpose would it be to take so much Pains towards making a Progress in the Knowledge of Sciences? To what Account would all this turn? Let us see. To be continually at Study; to learn some things, and to

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\* Am. 4. 10.

forget others; to compose Works, and to publish them; to gain a little Reputation in the World, then to die and leave it? As to that other Reputation, which we share after Death, it is no difficult Matter to see, that is nothing but a mere Chimera. We have no need of Posterity, and it is of no moment to our Repose and Happiness, whether our Names are preserv'd in the Memory of those, who come after us, or are buried in perpetual Oblivion.

What therefore are we to do? Must we renounce all Pursuits, and indulge our selves in Sloth, as it is the Practice of too many Mortals? No, Christians. But let our Studies be directed to an Evangelical End, and we shall find a solid and substantial Fruit arising from them. Let us suppose a Person applying himself to Letters only with a View to go to Heaven, and to conduct his Neighbour thither, and to be able to instruct the present and succeeding Ages. It is most certain, that his Pains will not be lost, and sooner or later he will receive the Reward of his Labours and good Intentions. But without pursuing this Tract, there is no solid Advantage to be found in the Sciences. We only build upon the Sand, labour without a Design, and take Pains without a Reason, and farther, we expose our selves to be detested and forsaken by God, whose Coun-



Countenance we never lose without losing the Truth, and abandoning our selves to Lyes and Delusions.

*Diogenes Laertius* has written the Life of Philosophers, and *St. Epiphanius* the History of Heresies. One may see by these two Performances, that there is no Fancy so extravagant, no Notion so monstrous, that Philosophers and Hereticks, tho' Men of uncommon Geniuses, have not conceiv'd, pursued, and taught; and all this God has permitted, to expose the Weakness of Human Understanding, and the Folly of trusting to our own Abilities. After this, who dare place any Confidence in his own Reason? Alas! since we see its Slips, its Wandrings, its Blindness, its Emptiness, let us think our selves highly indebted to our Faith, and apply our selves to pursue the Hopes it affords us.

I am very well perswaded, that amongst the Men of Letters, it is a difficult Matter to find any, who are addicted to Crimes punishable by the Civil Magistrate. Modesty, Honour, Application to Study, Love of Ease, and Desire of Glory, are so many powerful Checks to restrain them from the Commission of such Actions; but is this sufficient to procure Salvation? The *Pagan* Philosophers behav'd themselves with the same Decency, and yet they were condemned

ned by God, because, as the Apostle says, *they knew him without glorifying him.* We have a much better Knowledge of him, than They had ; what therefore will be our Punishment, if we glorify him not, if after their Example, we repose our Confidence not in Him, but in Our selves, and give a Loose to those vain Thoughts, with which They were puffed up? *He that glories, let him glory in the Lord \**. For indeed, if Men were to be our Judges, we should do well to glory in Them ; If we were to be our own Judges, we might very well glory in our selves ; but we are not to Judge our selves, God it is, that must Judge us. Let it therefore be our chief Concern to please Him alone, let us pay our Devotions to Him, and follow those Rules of worshipping Him, which he himself has prescrib'd us. Above all things, let us shew a peculiar Reverence for Christian Virtues, and apply a Christian End and Motive to those of Morality. Let us never defer the Exercise either of the one or the other, in Times and Places, where they may be practis'd ; let us embrace the Opportunity, which at this Instant offers it self, and humbly address our selves to God, after having celebrated the Virtues of this

Prelate, who, as he was our Father in his Episcopal Office, condescended to be our Brother in this Learned Society.

\* O Saviour of the World, and High Priest of our Profession, Sovereign Shepherd of our Souls, who reckons all other Shepherds in the Number of your Sheep, who obliges them to render an Account of their Spiritual Administration, and Judges them with the rest of Mankind, and even with more Severity, We know, there is nothing Pure in thy Sight, and the greatest Saints have trembled at the Rigour of thy Judgments.

He, whose Memory has assembl'd us in this Place, died in the Fear of your Justice, as he ever liv'd in it; but yet he died in the Hopes of your Mercy. He never split upon the Rocks either of Presumption or Despair, where unhappy Sinners are so often Shipwreck'd; he follow'd the Advice, which he had given to a vast Number of Sick Persons, who ended their Mortal Lives during the Course of His Ministry; and when He died, he enter'd into a closer Union with your Holy Spirit, and after having always sigh'd for You, *who are the Way, the*

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\* Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus, Heb. iii. 1.

*Truth, and the Life*, he hallow'd Your Name to his very last Groan.

We may therefore rest satisfied, that you have admitted him into Your adorable Presence, that You have opened to him the Sanctuary of Peace, and compleated the Purification of his Soul, by the Efficacy of Your Blood. Look down upon Us, who are celebrating his Memory, and give us Grace to imitate his Virtues, that We may likewise be introduc'd into the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and put into Possession of the same Everlasting Felicity, *Amen*.

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A DISCOURSE pronounc'd the 8th of JUNE 1671. by the Bishop of Condom, at present Bishop of Meaux, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr. du Chastelet.

Gentlemen,

I Find a greater Difficulty than ever of expressing my Sentiments, at this time that I am oblig'd to address my self to the Masters of Oratory, and have the Honour to be introduc'd into a Society, where we see Learning and Politeness appear with equal Lustre. What encreases my Concern,

is,



is, that having, out of Regard to me, broken through your usual Forms and Delays, You engage me to use the same Dispatch in returning You my Acknowledgments, as You your selves us'd, in laying me under so singular an Obligation; so that by the Greatness of Your Favours You have put it out of my Power to speak Worthily of them, and by the speedy manner of conferring them have depriv'd me of that Assistance, which I might have expected from Time and Meditation. Truly, *Gentlemen*, if the Business were only to lay open the Sentiments of my Heart, there would be no Occasion either for Study or Application to acquit my self of this Duty. But if I satisfy'd my self with giving You no other Marks of my Acknowledgments, than such as Nature dictates to all the World, without assigning the Reasons, which make my Reception into this Illustrious Society appear to me so Advantageous and so Honourable, should I not shew my self unworthy to be a Member of so celebrated a Body, and in some Measure derogate from that Honour, which You have done me by Your Choice? I must then tell You, *Gentlemen*, that I not only look upon this Academy, as an Assembly of Learned Men, whom the Love and Knowledge of Polite Learning unite together. When I go back to the Source of  
Your

Your Institution, I conceive a much higher Idea of so glorious an Establishment: Yes, *Gentlemen*, it is that indefatigable Spirit, which animated the Great Cardinal *Richlieu* to raise the Martial Glory of *France* to the highest Pitch; It is, I say, that same Spirit, which inspir'd Him with the Design of forming this Learned Society. Indeed, if the Opinion of a *Roman* Orator be true, *that Glory consists either in performing such Actions, as deserve to be recorded, or in composing such Writings, as deserve to be read*; was it not necessary, *Gentlemen*, that this incomparable Genius, in order to compleat his Work, should bring about an Alliance betwixt these two glorious Talents? It is what he has happily executed. Whilst the *French*, animated by his vigorous Counsels, were deserving by unheard-of Exploits to be celebrated by the ablest Pens of the Age, He took Care to assemble in the Capital City of the Kingdom a select Company of the most famous Writers in *France*. He resolv'd, that *France* should at once furnish both the Matter and Form of the most excellent Discourses; that it should at the same time be Learned and Victorious; that it should add the Empire of Letters to the glorious Advantage, which it had always preserv'd of Commanding by Arms. And certainly, *Gentlemen*, these two Excellencies contribute mutually

mutually to strengthen and support each other. As the Actions of an Hero raise the Spirit of a Writer, so He infuses Life into the most courageous Warriors, who are never more capable of making those generous Efforts, whereby Men are carried to Act something above their usual Strength, than when they entertain themselves with the pleasing Imagination of leaving to their Descendants, to their Family, and to their Country, ever living Copies of their Virtues, and eternal Monuments of their Memorable Enterprises. And what Hands so proper to raise these eternal Monuments, as those, which Stamp upon their Works that Character of Perfection, to which Time and Posterity pay the utmost Deference. This is the most, that Eloquence can do. But, *Gentlemen*, Eloquence dies, all its Colours fade, all its Graces vanish, except Men apply themselves with Diligence to fix the Languages in some Measure, and to make them durable. For otherwise, how can we think of trusting Immortal Actions with such Languages, as are always uncertain, always changing; and could Ours, I say, in particular secure Immortality, whose Beauties we every Day saw decaying, and which in the Course of a few Years became barbarous, even to *France* it self? What then? Shall we give up all Thoughts of pro-

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ducing Writings in the *French* Tongue,  
 which may entertain our Posterity, and  
 when we are employ'd upon Immortal  
 Works, must we always borrow the Lan-  
 guage of *Rome* and *Athens*? Who does not  
 see, that it would conduce more to the Glory  
 of the Nation, to form the *French* Tongue  
 in such a manner, that our Discourses  
 might take a more easy and lively Turn,  
 in a Phrase, that would be more natural  
 to us, and that freed at last from the Slavery  
 and Disreputation of being always imper-  
 fect Copies, we might aspire to the Glory  
 and Beauty of Originals. You have been  
 chosen, *Gentlemen*, to carry on this excel-  
 lent Design, under the Illustrious Protection  
 of that eminent Man, who is not less Ma-  
 ster of the Rules of Eloquence, than of  
 those of Justice, and who has presided  
 so many Years over the King's Councils,  
 as well by the Superiority of his Geni-  
 us, as by the Authority of his Commission.  
 ✓ Custom, I confess, is with reason call'd the  
 Father of Languages. The Right of settling,  
 as well as reforming them, has never been  
 disputed with the Multitude; however, if  
 this Liberty will not suffer it self to be quite  
 restrain'd, it will at least suffer to be direct-  
 ed. You, *Gentlemen*, are the regular and  
 perpetual Council, whose Authority, founded  
 upon the Publick Approbation, can restrain  
 the



the Licentiousness of Custom, and limit the unbounded Power of that too popular Empire. This is the Fruit, which we soon expect to reap from that admirable Work, in which you are employ'd, I mean, that Treasure of our Tongue, so Learned in its Searches, so judicious in its Remarks, so rich and fruitful in its Expressions. Such then is the Nature of this Institution, which was contriv'd to raise the *French* Tongue to the Perfection of the *Greek* and *Latin*. Thus do we see by Your Performances, that we may, in speaking *French*, join the *Attick* Delicacy and Purity to the *Roman* Majesty. This it is, that engages all Europe to learn Your Writings, and how averse soever *Italy* may be to allow You superiority in all Respects, it is ready to allow it in Polite Learning, and in the Sciences. Through Your Labours and your Examples, the true Beauties of Style discover themselves more and more in the *French* Works, since we find in them that Boldness, which is agreeable to Liberty, mix'd with that Reservedness, which is the Effect of Judgment and of Choice. Licentiousness is restrain'd by Precepts; Nevertheless you take Care, that too rigid a Nicety, or too soft a Delicacy, may not extinguish the Heat of Fancy, and enervate the Vigour of Style. Thus, *Gentlemen*, we may say, that Exactness is become through

Your Endeavours the peculiar Property of  
of our Language, which can no longer bear  
with any thing low or affected: So that  
having laid aside the Childishness of Infan-  
cy, and the Heat of transported Youth,  
form'd by Experience, and regulated by  
good Sense, it seems to have attain'd to  
that Perfection, which preserves it from  
suffering any Change. The ever flourish-  
ing Reputation of Your Writings, and e-  
ver shining Lustre of them, will hinder it  
from losing its Beauties, and we may ex-  
pect, that it will continue in the Condition,  
in which you have fix'd it, as long as the  
*French* Empire shall last, and as long as the  
House of *St. Louis* shall preside over *Europe*.  
Go on then, *Gentlemen*, to employ so Ma-  
jestic a Language, upon Subjects worthy  
of it. You are sensible, that Eloquence is not  
satisfied barely to entertain, either when it  
appears in all the Latitude of Prose, or con-  
fin'd to the Measures of Verse, tho' in ano-  
ther Respect less confin'd, takes a bolder  
Flight in Poetry, in all Points it is certain,  
that Eloquence was invented, or rather in-  
spir'd from above, for no other End than  
to inflame Men with the Love of Virtue,  
and it would be, says *St. Austin*, to let it  
down too much below its Dignity, should we suf-  
fer it to lavish away its Strength, in endeavour-  
ing to adorn Topicks, that are no ways useful.

But

But if you are desirous to preserve to the World that great, that serious, that true Eloquence, never give way to an impertinent Humour of Criticism, which sometimes by paying Court to Idleness, under a false Notion of Speaking or Writing with Ease, at other Times by Acting the Part of the Learned and Curious, in refining whimsically upon every thing, would in the End leave no Room for Art, and throw us again into Barbarousness of Speech. Shew in its Place a severe, but a rational Method of Criticism, and labour without Intermission to excel your selves every Day. Since such is at once the Power and the Weakness of Human Understanding, that we cannot come up to our own Ideas; so well has our Creator taken Care to demonstrate his own Infinity. However, in the midst of our Imperfections, a noble Object presents it self to support the Grandeur of Thought, and the Majesty of Style. We are at this Time under the Government of a King, whom You may represent to your selves in an Hundred glorious Capacities, and under an Hundred August Titles; Great in Peace and in War, at Home and Abroad, in Publick and Private, the World admires Him, it Fears, it Loves Him. At a distance He Astonishes, near at hand he Charms us; He Studies out of his immense Goodness to display

play a Thousand secret Beauties in one single Favour; His Understanding is vast, penetrating and regular, his Conception unlimited, his Expressions proper; He knows both Business and Men, he chuses them, he forms them, he applies them seasonably, he keeps them within their proper Sphere; Is Powerfull, Magnificent and Just. Has he a Mind to come to any Resolution, he takes right Reason to be His Counsellor, afterwards he sustains himself, he follows himself, and therefore every thing necessarily gives way to his invincible Steadiness. Behold, *Gentlemen*, the worthy Subject of Your Harangues, and Your Heroick Songs. Do you see this powerful King in his New Conquests, vying with the *Romans* in the Glory of prodigious Labours, as He always vy'd with them in that of Great Actions? High and Mighty Powers threatned his Territories; They fell in a Moment at His Feet, and shew'd themselves ready to undergo any Yoke he would lay upon them. Mountains are rais'd for Ramparts, and deep Pits are sunk for Trenches; the Earth no longer knows it self, changing its Form every Day under the Hands of his Soldiers, who in the Presence of their King find a new Support, and are animated to defend the Forteresses, which they have rais'd. You have often admir'd the Oeconomy of his House;



House, observe the Discipline of his Troops, that are perfect Strangers to any licentious Behaviour, and are no longer formidable to any, but the Common Enemy. These things are wonderfull, incredible, unheard-of; but his Genius, his Spirit, his Fortune, promise Him even Something more considerable. On what Side soever he moves, his Enemies dread the least Step he takes, they are sensible of his Power, and his Ascendant over them, and their affected Fierceness is but an ill Cover for their Fear, and their Despair. Let us finish: For whither would the Spirit, that urges me on, transport me? He is a Lover both of Learning and the Learned; it is with Them in a manner, that he has been pleas'd to entrust the most valuable Charge of the Nation, it is left to Them to cultivate the most shining Genius, and the brightest Parts in the World. This *Dauphin*, this lovely Prince is now happily surmounting the first Difficulties of Study; and if he is not discourag'd by the Thorns, how eager will be his Pursuit after Knowledge, when he shall gather Flowers, and Fruit. They are educating for You, *Gentlemen*, a Great Protector; if our Prayers are heard, if our Labours prosper, this Prince will be one Day not only the worthy Subject of Your Discourses, He will know their Beauties,

He will relish their Excellencies, He will crown their Merit.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd the 12th of January 1673. by Mr. Flechier Abbot, at present Bishop of Nismes, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr. Godeau, Bishop of Vence.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**F I had receiv'd the Honour, that is conferr'd upon me at present, before the King had honour'd You with his Protection, I had employ'd all this Discourse to let You know, how happy I esteem my self to have a Place amongst You, to enter into a Commerce, that Virtue, Friendship, and an Intercourse of Polite Learning, renders so valuable and so agreeable; to see my Name amongst those of so many Illustrious Men; to partake with You that Reputation, which You have all acquir'd, and which I never could have merited; to profit by Your Lights, and by Your Examples, and to learn of You all the Graces of Discourse, all the Rules of Politeness.

I should have reminded You of the Birth of this Illustrious Society under a King\*, whom Justice, Piety, Victories, and the Greatness of the Events in his Reign, might have render'd incomparable, if he had not left a Son, who surpasses all those, who preceded him, and will scarce find in Posterity Successors, who will equal him. I should have spoke of this Great Cardinal, who believ'd it not enough to have employ'd all his own Care and Vigilance for the Grandeur of his Master, had he not also consecrated Yours to Him; and that the *Alps* forc'd, the Sea held Captive within its Mounds, the Forts of the Rebels, destroy'd with the Rebels themselves, might have left a great Fame, but that You alone in Your Writings could make it Immortal.

I should have spoke of the celebrated Chancellor, who, after having declar'd his Oracles in the Supreme Tribunals of Justice, came to preside at those, that were deliver'd from Your Assemblies; and thought himself as much interested in the Glory and Progress of Learning, as in the Protection of the Rights and Properties of the People. After having thus join'd Your Praises with those of Your Protectors, considering what

You are, and what I am, mov'd with a just Acknowledgment, and a becoming Confusion, I should have thought, I had acquitted my self of this Duty, by blushing for my Imperfections, and glorying in the Favour You have done me.

But at present, *Gentlemen*, that You are under the Protection of a Prince, so Great by the Superiority of his Genius, by the Glory of his Exploits, by the Extent of his Power, give me Leave to speak no more of Your past Prosperities, to forget for a Time even the Honour You do me, that I may reflect upon That, which You have received, and that without troubling You with Expressions of Modesty, which may offend You, I may congratulate You upon the Subject of Your own Glory.

What an happy Revolution is there in the Fortune of Men of Learning? Heretofore they beheld with a distant Awe the Grandeur and Majesty of Kings, whom they knew but by the Credit of Fame. Scarce ever could their Voice reach the Ears of those; whose Victories they sung. They enter'd sometimes into the Closet of a *Mecenas*, but very rarely approach'd the Palace of *Augustus*; whether from a generous Disdain of empty Grandeurs, whether from a just Indignation at the Ignorance of their Age, they liv'd in their Solitudes, wrapt up  
with



with their own Virtue, and shunn'd the Courts of Kings, where Pride took Place of Modesty, and where Fortune was almost always more honour'd than Merit.

It was reserv'd to the Greatest of Kings to restore the Honour of Letters in Your Favour, to open to You his own Palace, to make You find, even in the *Louvre*, all the Sweetnesses of a Retreat, to give You a noble Repose under the Shadow of his Throne, and in the middle of this ambitious and busy Court, to make himself, as it were, Another Court of a more peaceable and un aspiring Nature, where an honest Emulation reigns, and where Souls, that are compos'd and disinterested, labour to enrich themselves with the Treasures of the Mind, and seek a Glory more pure than that of the Vulgar.

If You receive so much Glory from this Act of Grace conferr'd upon You, You will reap no less from Your own Acknowledgments, since in praising Your August Protector, You may deserve Your selves immortal Praises. Nothing is so common as to make the Panegyrick of Princes, and nothing so difficult. As they do not always act in the manner they ought, one is oft reduc'd to praise in them, not what one sees they have, but what one could wish they had, and forsake Truth for Decency. One must skilfully fall upon the Topicks of their Birth, and their Ancestors,  
and

and to find out something that is great, one must often seek it Elsewhere than in Themselves.

But here the Prince is above his Dignity. His Life affords ample Matter for his Elogy, without borrowing from his Fortune. As his Birth has asserted him the Greatest of Kings, his Sentiments and his Actions confirm him the Greatest of Men. The Provinces conquer'd, the Disorders remov'd, the Laws re-establish'd, the Arts flourishing, those Letters, which You cultivate with so much Success, honour'd with his Care and Esteem, that Courage so active in his Military Expeditions, that Wisdom so conspicuous in his Counsels, that Vigilance so attentive in the Multitude of Affairs, are they not such Subjects, as would reflect a Glory upon him, who treats of 'em?

I know Your Modesty, *Gentlemen*, methinks I hear You say, that Heroick Virtue, surpassing ordinary Rules and common Maxims, has in it such an Excess of Splendor, that raises it above ordinary Expressions and Conceptions. It is true, there is a natural Grandeur, which Art cannot attain to, that Eloquence cannot express, whatever Valour can perform, that there are Actions more noble and bold than her Figures, that she has the Skill to raise little Subjects, but has the Misfortune to sink beneath

neath Great Attempts, and the most finish'd Orator, whilst he endeavours to set off the Glory of a Hero, oftentimes hazards his own.

But I know, that as there are enterprising Men, who aspire after great Exploits, there are select Geniuses, who know how to place them in their truest Light, who are clear in their Judgments, solid in their Reasons, agreeable in their Discourses, just in their Expressions, who are, in fine, what You are. For my self, who am now enter'd into the same Engagements, and to whom Heaven has not been so liberal, I hope, that even the Greatness of the Design will support the Weakness of my Genius. In other Encomiums the Performance receives a Lustre from Eloquence, in this Eloquence receives a Lustre from the Performance, the Mind is in some measure transported out of its self, and rises with its Object, and without the Help of Colours, and the Import of Forreign Beauties, so great a Theme is of its self its own Ornament.

If the Protection of the Prince be so glorious to You, I will venture to say, that in protecting You, He does Himself an Honour, and that the Care, which he employs for Your Repose, augments his own Glory. If He knows how to reign, and conquer, You know how to write his Reign, and make his Conquests admir'd: And where can he  
find,

find, but in Your Works, the Immortality, that his great Actions have deserv'd?

Statues erected in the publick Places, Inscriptions engrav'd upon Columns, Trophies rais'd upon the Field of Battel, Names deriv'd from conquer'd Towns or Provinces, are glorious Monuments, that preserve the Reputation and Memory of Princes; but besides, as they are dumb Encomiums, empty Titles, and imperfect Representations, they can be but in some few Places, and can last but for a few Ages. Time consumes the most solid Metals, effaces the best engrav'd Characters, and overturns the fairest Trophies.

There is nothing, but the Productions of the Mind, can give a true Glory. They partake of the Nature and Excellence of their Principle, and are almost as full of Life and as Immortal as the Soul, from whence they proceed; they record all the Motions of the Hearts and Souls of Heroes; they represent them by Images so lively, that they every where excite Esteem and Emulation; and so descending from one Generation to another, even to latest Posterity, they make, as it were, a perpetual Triumph thro' all Climates and all Ages.

Therefore, when the King, ready to march at the Head of his Armies, declar'd himself your Protector, I plac'd the Favour, that he did  
You



( III )

You, amongst the Number of his good Fortunes. I did then believe, that Heaven, which had destin'd him to subdue Pride, and re-build Altars, had destin'd You to celebrate his Valour and his Piety, and that the same Fire, which inspir'd His Courage, ought to inspire Your Zeal.

In effect, Gentlemen, who better than You can discover all the Sources of the War? Who can make appear with greater Horror the Insolence of those People, who violated the Faith of Treaties with Impunity, and by secret Negotiations excited all the Courts of *Europe* against a King, whom they could charge with no other Fault, unless it was, that he was too powerful? Not being able to discredit the Actions of so just a Prince, they endeavour'd to render his Designs suspected: they set up themselves for Arbiters of Peace and War, and could not allow themselves either to be mov'd with the Indignation of Kings, or to be oblig'd by their Favours: they revolted at last from their Allies, as they did at first from their Masters, giving the Name of Policy to Perfidiousness, and thought, they might maintain themselves by Ingratitude, when they establish'd themselves by a Revolt.

One of a Soul less elevated than his had follow'd the impetuous Dictates of his Rage, and made all his Power become subservient  
to

to the signalizing of his Indignation, he would have sacrific'd to his Hatred or Revenge, whatever attack'd his Reputation or Grandeur; but this calm Prince hath seen his Enemies swell with Pride without being mov'd, and without complaining, and by a sort of fierce Clemency holding the Thunderbolt suspended, has condemn'd during these Three Years their insolent Railleries.

You alone, *Gentlemen*, can express nobly the heroick Temper of Power without Pride, Severity without Rage, Resentment without Ill-nature, Justice without Passion, Prudence without Weakness, Valour without Temerity.

All Posterity will see him in Your Works, as we have seen him, providing for all without interrupting his Repose, regulating the Motions of all *Europe* without moving himself, acting incessantly, and yet without Hurry, presiding over the Tumults of the World, and enjoying his own Tranquillity. One would be apt to say, that he had only Thoughts of procuring a Repose for himself in these enchanted Palaces, where Art has plac'd all the Graces of Nature; yet he intermix'd his Cares with his Diversions, and even in his Retirements effac'd the false Impressions, which his Enemies had given of his Power; he kept his Neighbours within their Bounds, as much by the Admiration of his  
his

his Virtues, as by the Terror of his Arms; he dissolv'd those Leagues, that were thought to be eternal, and remov'd such from the Alliances of other Princes, as had not sufficiently respected His.

But when Vengeance has been not only just, but also necessary, with what Ardour has he gone to share the Fatigues, and even the Dangers of War, with the meanest Officers of his Armies? Some have believ'd, that Wisdom was the Virtue of Kings, and that Valour was only the Virtue of private Persons; that it was a Prerogative of Royalty to enjoy the Fruit of Victories, and leave to others the Trouble of vanquishing; that a Prince ought to be immoveable in the Center of his Empire, without trusting his Reputation to the Fortune of Arms; that it suffic'd, that he reserv'd to himself the Command and Authority, and at a Distance rul'd the Motion of all the Springs of War.

Our Hero is unacquainted with such pusillanimous Politicks. To maintain the Repose of his People, he goes himself to fight those, who disturb it. He esteems it a Justice, that he owes to his Subjects, to shew them the Path of Honour, to remark their Valour himself, and to recompense Merit, after having been a Witness of it. He knows, that the Presence of the Prince spreads a strange Influence of Courage and

Vigour thro' his Armies, and that those great Bodies are so much the more strong and active, as they receive at less Distance the Impressions of their Motions and Force. He knows, in fine, that it is not so much Pomp and Majesty, that makes Kings, as Great and Sovereign Virtues ; that there is an Honour, which they owe to themselves, and no Homage can render them, and that their truest Glory is that, which they fetch from its very Fountain thro' all the Toils and Difficulties, that encompass it.

Why have not I, *Gentlemen*, the Delicacy, the Facility, the Turn of His Thought, whose Place I have the Honour to fill, to describe the Marches of Armies, the Surrender of Towns, the Passage of Rivers, the Rapidity of the Victories of this Conqueror, who divides and multiplies himself into as many Places, as he has different Armies, and over-runs the Provinces of his Enemies with so much Swiftneſs, that they scarce ever know where he is, and always know, that he has conquer'd ?

Why cannot I express, as You would do, what his Name alone has lately done upon the Frontiers ! The Vanquish'd seem'd to have re-assumed Courage, they dar'd to attack our Places, they, who had not the Spirit to defend their own. The King departs. At the bare Report of his March the Besiegers



gers tremble, as if they were besieg'd themselves. Those Designs so infallible and so concerted, those Succours so powerful and so invincible, are dispers'd together with them, and they have nothing remaining but the miserable Consolation of having shewn, with a great deal of Weakness, some Degree of Rashness.

But I raise my Voice insensibly, I perceive, that animated by Your Presence, by the Subject of my Discourse, by the Majesty of this Place, I undertake to speak in an imperfect manner that, which You have already said, or will say with so much Strength of Oratory. It belongs to You, *Gentlemen*, to make Crowns for the Conqueror; I can only strew some Flowers in the Way of his Triumph. It is You, that must give those bold Strokes, that represent him, and give him his Air of Grandeur; I can only employ faint Colours, and draw with an unsteady Hand some Copies of those perfect Originals. But if I be not so happy as to support the Honour, that this Learned Company has done me to Day, I can say, that I am sensible of something in my self, that is not unworthy of it, a profound Veneration for all those, who compose it, and a very ardent Zeal for the Glory of the greatest King in the World, who protects it.

*An Harangue to the King, after the  
Surrender of Cambray, pronounc'd  
the 25th of April 1678. by Mr.  
Perrault, Director of the Academy.*

S I R,

**H**OW extraordinary soever the new  
Conquests of Your Majesty may be,  
methinks Your Subjects ought to be the less  
transported with Joy and Admiration, as  
they are accusom'd to see You return Every  
Year in Triumph. But the most common  
Blessings, when universal, never fail to  
create an universal Pleasure, and Nature  
always puts on the same gay and smiling  
Aspect upon the Return of Spring, tho' it  
returns dres'd up with the same Flowers.  
It must again be consider'd, that we are  
not accusom'd to Wonders, especially to  
such, as bear a peculiar and distinguishing  
Mark of Grandeur. All the Exploits of  
Your Majesty have been Prodigies of Va-  
lour, of Prudence, of Vigilance, and other  
Heroick Virtues, which, after the Victory  
was won, have contended with each other,  
which of them has had the greatest Share  
in it, and some or other has always carried  
it from the rest. The same Dispute is this  
Day reviv'd amongst them, where we may  
say, that, if we are amaz'd at the surprising  
Ef-

Effects of the most perfect Valour, that ever was, and that swift manner of Conquering, which cannot be parallel'd, we are lost and confounded upon viewing the Depth of that Wisdom, which has conceiv'd, prepar'd, and conducted so many vast Undertakings to the End propos'd. How attentively soever all *Europe* may have watch'd the Designs of Your Majesty, they were not able to make a Discovery of them, till they were ready for Execution. Those consummate Politicians, who pretend to see Effects in the Womb of their Causes, and believe, that nothing in all Futurity can escape their Foresight, any more than any thing upon Earth can their Ambition, were at a loss to foresee those prodigious Events, which were preparing and forming even in their own Country, and under their own Eyes; like Philosophers, who, notwithstanding their continual Study of Nature, are puzzled to find out the secret and hidden Springs, by which her Wonders are wrought.

The Troops march, without knowing what Route they are to take, or upon what Expedition they are going, they content themselves with knowing, that they are going to conquer, whithersoever they are led. But when the fix'd Time of shewing Your Power is accomplish'd, no less than Five Towns are invested all at once by in-

numerable Forces, that seem to spring out of the Earth, with Plenty of Provision and Ammunition attending them. The Surprise of the Enemy is incredible, when they see the very Capital City of *Flanders* attack'd, their Astonishment is rais'd beyond measure, and to that degree, that the Town is ready to surrender, before they apprehend, that it is invested. Your Majesty scarce allows Your Self Time to finish the Conquest of it, before You are pleas'd to pass to a Place, not less considerable, but more worthy of Your Invincible Arms. The Besieged, defended by Numbers and strong Fortifications, make all the vigorous Resistance of gallant Soldiers, but the Attacks are so warm, and the Proofs of Valour, which the Besiegers give, are so extraordinary, and so often repeated, that they acquire some sort of Honour in submitting to them; and indeed so great is the Glory of the Conqueror, that a Part of it falls even to the Share of the Conquer'd. You ought, Sir, to set a higher Value upon this Glory, as it belongs entirely to Your Self, and cannot with any Colour of Justice be divided amongst the Persons, whom Your Majesty has employ'd in Your Conquests, since it cannot be denied, but that they are Instruments made and form'd by You, and that the Prudence of some, as well as the Valour of others, is no other



other than the Effect of Your Example, and of Your Instructions. Princes are thought to act wisely enough, when they make Choice of able Men to fill the Posts, which they give them. Your Majesty shews a more sublime Genius. You give them not only the Posts, but the Qualifications necessary to fill them with Applause: You are possess'd of a Virtue, that raises them above themselves, and which, by transforming them into other Men, makes them perform such wonderful Atchievements, that after their Execution they can scarce believe, that they themselves have done them. It is an easy Matter to judge, what will be the Consequences of a Campaign so gloriously begun. However, Sir, we are persuaded, that if God would open the Eyes of Your Enemies, and by letting them see their approaching and inevitable Ruin in maintaining the War any longer, would dispose their Hearts to enter into a Treaty of Peace, we are persuaded, I say, that Your Majesty, tho' You see Victory inviting You on every Side, and preparing Trophies for You in all Places, where You shall judge proper to turn Your Arms, would, notwithstanding, have Power enough to stop that rapid Course of Your Conquests, able to bear away any Soul less great than Your own. Your Majesty knows, that the Glory of Conquerors,

when it is arriv'd even at the highest Point of its Lustre, such as shéws it self so splendidly this Day in Your August Person, makes up only one Part of the Glory of Great Kings. You know, that if Peace hinders You from the Exercise of Your Valour, it gives You more Liberty to exercise Your other Virtues, Your Justice, whose Voice will be much better heard, when the Noise of Arms shall cease; Your Magnificence, which, as Royal and Incomprehensible as it is in the midst of War, will be better able to leave Eternal Monuments of the Grandeur of Your Reign; and especially that good-natur'd Virtue, wherein consists the true Character of Kings, I mean the ardent Desire, which Your Majesty has to compleat the Happiness of Your People, by establishing an entire Tranquillity and perfect Plenty. This, Sir, is the Idea, which the Members of the *French Academy* entertain of You. They look upon You as a compleat and finish'd Model, whereof all the Lines demand their Admiration, and of which they labour continually to take faithful Copies, that can never fade, not only to satisfy the grateful Sentiments, which they entertain of Your Favours, and of Your Glorious Protection, but that those same Virtues, which occasion the present Felicity of Your People, may become farther useful

to

to Posterity by the Heroick Examples, which they will afford Princes in After-Ages.

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*An Harangue address'd to Monseigneur the Dauphin, upon the Death of the Queen, and pronounc'd the 28th August 1683, by Mr. Charpentier.*

*My Lord,*

THE Members of the *French Academy* would have been very glad, that the first time they paid her humblest Respects to You, it had been upon an Occasion less sorrowful than the present. But their Duty not leaving them at Liberty to make a Choice, they think themselves very much honour'd to appear before You at a Time, when the principal Companies of the Realm press forward to give You Assurances of the Part, which they bear in Your Sorrow. The Favours which we have receiv'd at the Hands of *Lewis the Great*, have exceeded our Hopes, and we should think our selves oblig'd to talk to You upon no other Subject, if the mention of our Acknowledgements were seasonable at this melancholy Juncture, or if You were able to hear of any thing besides Sighs and Complaints. The Death of

our

our August Queen takes up to Day all Your Thoughts, and all Ours; and we should think we made a very injurious Attempt, if we went about to oppose the Motions of Your Tendernefs, and Your Piety. Time must be allow'd You, my Lord, to accustom Your self to a Separation, so bitter, and so unexpected, to profit your self by the Succours, which Philosophy and the Study of Polite Learning afford. Indeed, my Lord, to survey You on every Side, You appear invincible to Passions, after the great Care You have taken to fortify your self against all their Attacks. But to say the Truth, the End of Philosophy is not to extinguish in a generous Soul all those Sentiments, which Nature inspires. It does not forbid a Wise Man to afflict himself sometimes; It does not pretend to transform him into a senseless Vegetable, or into a moving Statue. It is just, it is honourable, to have a quick Sense of such Losses, as can never be repair'd. Suffer us only to say this, My Lord, that the Son of *Lewis* the Great ought never to be inconsolable under any Affliction, as long as Heaven shall think fit to preserve to us His August Father.



*An Harangue to Madam the Dauphin,  
upon the Death of the Queen, pro-  
nounc'd the same Day by Mr. Char-  
pentier.*

*Madam,*

**T**HE Loss, which *France* has lately sustain'd, must have touch'd You in a very sensible Manner. You have lost the best of Mothers, and We the most virtuous of Queens. They, who approach Persons of your Rank upon these Occasions, are suppos'd to come with a Design to comfort them. Shall I take the Liberty, Madam, to say, that it is at this Time quite otherwise, and that You are the Person, that comfort Us. The Prince, You have oblig'd us with, and that other, whom we expect from You, are infallible Remedies against our Grief. Through such precious Pledges as these, our Posterity has Assurances of being blest with the Blood of *Lewis* the Great. This is a Thought, that dispells all Melancholy. Besides, Madam, can it be denied, that the Divine *Therese* upon leaving us has enter'd into Glory? From thence it is, that She will procure new Triumphs for Her August Spouse, for Her Dear Son, and for all

all Your Royal Issue. Let us then so far comply with Nature and Custom, as to shed Tears, to put on Mourning, and appear with all the formal Dress of Funeral Solemnities; but never let us after the usual Manner be inwardly afflicted for a Princess, whose Name will be held in the highest Reverence at our Altars, and whose Death will one Day or other give Occasion to One of our Festivals.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd the 25th of August, 1687. by Mr. de Choisy, when he was admitted into the Place of the Duke of St. Aignan.*

*Gentlemen,*

WERE not the Laws of the *Academy* against me, I should take a Resolution of observing a respectful Silence. I should follow the Examples of the New Cardinals, who, at their first Admission into the Sacred College, have their Mouths clos'd in Form and defer Speaking, till I had learn'd of You to speak gracefully. But I must conform my self to Custom; I must give some Testimony of my Gratitude. And what Expressions

pressions shall I employ, to shew You the Extent of it? How can I describe the Pleasure of being incorporated into a Society with the Greatest and most Illustrious Persons of the Kingdom.

Here it is, that the first Ministers of State divest themselves of all the Pomp of Grandeur, and expect no other Distinction than what arises from Sublimity of Genius, and Profoundness of Capacity; For, *Gentlemen*, it is not to Illustrious Birth alone, nor Eminent Offices, that your Society owes its Splendor. The Possession of the most Important Employments will not give a Man a Right to a Place in your Company; Wit and Learning only gain Admittance There. Those are the Qualifications, which distinguish You from the rest of Mankind, and justly entitle You to Universal Admiration, for the Soundness of Your Divinity, the Penetration of Your Philosophy, the Perfection of Your Poetry, the Power of Your Eloquence, and the Excellency of Your Histories, that will transmit the Wonders of this Age to late Posterity.

When I behold my self seated amidst those Great Men, whom for the Future I shall have the Honour of styling my Colleagues, I find my self excited by a noble Emulation to imitate the Models I am going to be intimate with. My Assiduity in frequenting

quenter Your Assemblies will make up for my Want of Merit, and peradventure be a Means of acquiring it. Methinks I already perceive my self animated by the powerfull Influences of the *Academy*, which raise me above my self; and this indeed would be necessary to repair the inestimable Loss You have sustain'd in Him, to whose Place I succeeed, and who deserves equally Your Praise, and Your Sorrow.

Scarce are the Years of Childhood past, but he advances to Battle and to Glory in the Paths of his Ancestors- He is wounded at *Vaudremont*, at the Siege of *Dole*, and still more dangerously at that of *Gravelin*; and if he seeks afterwards all Occasions of signalizing his Valour, it is, because that Valour, that lively Ardour of Glory, which forms the Hero, fill'd his Heart, and being too great and too impetuous to be contain'd there, rush'd forth like a Torrent.

Which of You, Gentlemen, was a Stranger to the Elevation, and Vivacity of His Genius? Almost every Moment produc'd some remarkable Instance of it. Tho' a Governour of a Province, Duke and Peer of *France*, Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber, he dedicated a large Portion of his Time to the Muses, and esteem'd himself honour'd by the Title of Member of the *Academy*.

His



His Generous Temper excited in him a warm Desire to do all good Offices to Mankind. To be a Man of Letters, or to be unfortunate was sufficient to procure his Protection. But what Alone would be an Ample Penegyrick was his Inviolable and Affectionate Attachement to the King's Person, and this Prince honour'd him with his Benevolence.

But all these Advantages, which made him admir'd in the Principal Court of the Universe, could not exempt him from the common Fate of Mankind. He is Dead; but 'tis an Happiness for *France*, that he has left behind him a Son, the worthy Heir of his Great Soul, and Eminent Virtues, who from his tender Infancy, caress'd in the Court and in the Camp, distinguish'd by Favours, and tempted with Pleasures, hath sanctified his Moral Virtues with a Christian Piety, universally known and respected.

It is Your Province, *Gentlemen*, to transmit to Immortality the Actions of this Great Man, of whose Loss You will be a long time sensible. You will do him this Justice; His Memory will live for ever in Your Works, as every Production of Yours partakes of the Sublime Genius of Your Founder.

If

If *Cæsar* by his Victories added vast Provinces to the *Roman* Empire, and *Cicero* by his Eloquence enlarg'd the Genius of the *Roman* People; may we not affirm, that Cardinal *Richlieu* alone effectuated in *France*, what *Cæsar* and *Cicero* perform'd jointly at *Rome*; and that if the *French* Nation is oblig'd to his refin'd Maxims of Policy for extending our Frontiers, it is no less oblig'd to his Establishment of the *Academy*, for elevating, polishing, and if I may use the Expression, Aggrandizing our Genius.

But, *Gentlemen*, of how great Advantage soever the Establishment of this Society might be to the State, it was still of Greater to Himself; For his Name had been buried in Oblivion, and the greatest Part of his Actions, tho' stamp'd with a singular Character of Grandeur, might have been unknown to After-Ages, if in founding the *Academy*, he had not at the same time laid the Foundation of an Eternal Record for his own Glory.

At his Death the *Academy*, driven almost to Despair, found a sure Refuge under the Protection of an Illustrious Chancellor, whose Memory will be ever Dear to You, and who during the Thirty Five Years that he presided in the Tribunal of Justice, was universally acknowledg'd to be the most discerning of Magistrates.

But

But when You had lost him, disquieted with New Alarms, and uncertain of Your Destiny, what a joyful, what a glorious Relief did You meet with ! A King, the Greatest of Kings declares himself Your Protector, admits You into his Palace, and puts You upon a Level with the most Eminent Societies of this Kingdom. By this unparalleled Condescension, *Gentlemen*, Your Names, join'd with His, will become Immortal, Your Joy will embrace and be supported by His Lawrel. There is between this Prince and You an Intercourse of Glory : And if His Protection be so great an Honour to You ; you may flatter your selves, that You are not insignificant even to the Glory of this Prince, between whose Actions and those of *David* and *Solomon* there seems to be a near Resemblance ; for if *David* at the Beginning of his Reign reduc'd his rebellious Subjects to Obedience ; if his Grandeur and Power excited the Jealousy of his Neighbours ; if with his Forces alone he resisted so many Confederate Princes ; if he took so many Towns, subdued so many Provinces ; and extended his Conquests to the *Euphrates* ; in fine, if, satiated with Glory, He condescended to give Peace to Nations, that were no longer in a Condition of making Head a-

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gainst Him; have we not seen these Wonders renew'd in Our Time? But now I shall display a Scence more peaceable, and yet more Glorious. *Solomon* had only in View the Service of God, and the Prosperity of his Subjects; He thought himself exalted to the Throne on Purpose to erect that stately Temple, which will be Famous throughout all Ages: Ever in a Condition of undertaking a War, He enjoy'd the Tranquillity of a settled Peace; His Troops numerous and formidable, made him respected by His Neighbours; and the New Forteresses, which were rais'd on His Frontiers, were their Security: His Ships travers'd Seas, till then unknown, and return'd laden with the Treasures of the Universe: The Kings of *India* sent Him Embassadors, who, surpris'd at his Aspect, were oblig'd to acknowledge, that Fame, however partial She is to living Princes, had related nothing of Him but what was short of Truth.

If it be a Mark of an Accomplish'd Merit to be at once both a *Cicero* and a *Caesar*, as was the famous *Richieu*, is it not a higher Character to be at once both a *David* and a *Solomon*, as is our present most Glorious Sovereign?

But whither does my indiscreet Zeal hurry me? Scarce admitted amongst You, I attempt a Subject, that would astonish the  
greatest



greatest Oratours, and without weighing my Force, I dare mention a King, of whom it is Presumption in any to speak, except in Those, who like You, *Gentlemen*, can express themselves in Terms Worthy of Him.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd the 5th of May 1691. by Mr. Fontenelle, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr. Villager deceas'd, Dean of the Council of State.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**F I was not this Day determin'd to suppress every flattering Temptation of Vanity, it would infallibly get the Ascendant over me, and throw me into a most pleasing and bewitching Error. Upon my Admission into this Illustrious Society, I might fancy my self admitted to be a Sharer of all its Glory; I might think my self a Partaker of that Immortal Fame, which attends You; and, as Vanity is not less bold in forming its Conceits, than ingenious in defending them, I might draw an Argument from Your Penetration and Discernment to delude my self into an Opinion, that my

own Abilities and Qualifications had led You to fix Your Choice upon Me:

But, *Gentlemen*, I dare assure You, that I banish from my Thoughts such agreeable Illusions. I am too sensible of the Motive, that has engag'd you to honour me with Your Suffrages; I have shewn by my Conduct, that I knew how to set a just Value upon the Honour of obtaining a Place in the *French Academy*, and You have regarded that Knowledge as a sort of Merit; yet the Merit of Another has been a much stronger Argument with you in my Favour. By the good Fortune of my Birth, I am ally'd to a considerable Name, which in the noblest Productions of Wit, outshines and effaces all others; a Name, for which You your selves retain an Honour. What ample Matter might the Illustrious \* deceas'd, who first ennobled it, afford me! I question not, but the Publick, being thoroughly perswaded of the Truth of his Character, would give me leave to overlook that Nicety, which forbids us to publish any Praises, wherein through nearness of Blood we might claim a Part; however I am willing to spare myself the Confusion of not being able with all the Zeal of Consanguinity to speak of this

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\* *Mr. P. Corneille, his Uncle.*

Great Man, any otherwise than They speak of him, who are less interested in his Glory.

You, *Gentlemen*, who will always preserve a Value for his Memory, are pleas'd to shew a Regard for it, by placing me in a Condition never to bring any dishonour to it : Put it out of the Power of the World to reproach Nature for uniting me to him by too near a Relation. You are able, *Gentlemen*, to accomplish such a Work, nay I dare believe, that You have this Day engag'd your selves in it. Being convinc'd within your selves, that your bright Talents are of a communicative Nature, You have granted me a Place in the *Academy* ; and could You have admitted me amongst You, without a Design of imparting Your Abilities to me? Could I have dar'd, without the Assurance of Your Help, to succeed a great Magistrate, whose Genius, how wide soever the Difference may be betwixt the Characters of a Counsellor of State, and a Member of the *Academy*, was able to comprehend the whole Business of both Capacities.

I perceive a very strong Inclination within my self to enlarge upon the Obligations, which I have to You, and I resist so natural an Impulse, not because I am incapable to express my self in a manner suitable to the Favour; I would not make the least Attempt of that kind ; but because I will give You

a better Testimony of my Gratitude, when I engage my self, with a Zeal equal to Yours, in an Undertaking, wherein You Your selves are the most nearly concern'd. A noble Prospect presents it self to You, a lofty Idea employs Your Thoughts, and would render You insensible to any other Discourse; I therefore suspend my private Sentiments, and hasten to the only thing, that can move You.

*Mons* has lately surrender'd it self. In the very Juncture, whilst a Prince, who derives all His Glory from His Jealousy to That of *LEWIS* the Great, calls together His Councils, compos'd of Sovereigns, with an Air of Ostentation, where his ambitious Spirit flatters it self with the Homages, which he owes to nothing but the Terror, which *France* strikes into them; whilst he lays the Schemes of a Campaign more successful than the former, Schemes with Difficulty brought forth after the slowest and most tedious Debates, It happens, that at the very Door of this Council, in the very Heat of these Deliberations, *LEWIS* attempts to make himself Master of the most considerable Town in the Enemy's Hands.

At this Alarm the Assembly disperses; the Chief flies with the utmost Precipitation where he judges his Presence necessary, leaves nothing unattempted, makes his last Efforts;



Efforts ; in short, assembles a considerable Army, that he might not be Witness of the Surrender of *Mons*, without enhancing the Glory of the Action. It was the King's Happiness to have call'd this Spectator of His Conquest from beyond the Seas, a Conquest as happy as it was glorious, if in the midst of the good Success, with which it was attended, it had not fill'd us with an inexpressible Concern. It may be needless to mention the Occasion of it ; Under the Reign of *LEWIS* we can have no Fears, but when He exposes himself.

At the same time *Nice*, which lies in the Territories of another Enemy, and upon whose Fate the rest almost depends, *Nice* is oblig'd to submit to our Victorious Arms ; and all this while the Campaign is not yet begun. How much Grandeur, how much Majesty appears in the Enterprises of the King ! Nothing can diminish the Glory of them, but the speedy Success, whereby perhaps the Difficulties of the Attempt will be hid from the Eyes of Posterity, and no mention made of all those Obstacles, which have either been prevented or surmounted. Undertakings so prodigious and so bold want nothing to set them off, but Slowness and Solemnity in the Execution.

When we saw some Years ago the Storm gathering, which a turbulent Spirit had

been raising against us, a Spirit ambitious without measure, and yet not without Conduct, elated with successful Wickedness; When we saw even Princes join in the Confederacy, who, notwithstanding their Weakness, were become formidable, because they augmented the Number of those, that were so already; we were wishing, it's true, that so many Enemies would split upon the Rock of LEWIS's Power, but let us not conceal the Opinion, that we had of them, which, how high soever it was rais'd, did not promise any thing beyond a glorious Resistance.

We find, that the Opposition of LEWIS produces new Conquests, he knows not how to secure his Frontiers without extending them, or to defend his Territories without enlarging them.

He had disclaim'd by Treaty of Peace the making himself Master of *Europe*, and yet all *Europe* breaks out into a new War, that restores him to his Rights, and invites him to repair the Loss, which he voluntarily sustain'd by his Moderation. He held his Valour Captive, till His Enemies themselves set it at Liberty, and left the whole Universe open to him.

Why cannot we re-call the Great Minister, to whom the *French* Academy owes its Rise, why cannot we re-call Him from Death, and make him a Spectator of so ma-

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ny Wonders? He, who under the Directions of the justest of Kings laid the Foundation of this Grandeur of *France*, with what Astonishment would he see his own Schemes, carried on so far beyond his own Thought, and Expectation? He, who was sent amongst us to prepare the Way for *LEWIS* the Great, could he have believ'd, that he had open'd a Scene of so much Glory?

Surpris'd at so much Honour, he would pardon this Society its Inability under this Reign to discharge the Duty, which He had laid upon it, of celebrating in a worthy manner the Heroes, that *France* should produce. He would behold with equal Pleasure both our Zeal, and our Incapacity. They, who would attempt the Praises of *LEWIS*, find themselves oppress'd with the same Weight of Grandeur, Valour, and Wisdom, which at this time oppresses all the Enemies of his Kingdom. The only Part, that Envy has to take, is a sincere Submission, and all, that is left for Eloquence, is a silent Admiration,

*A Dis.*

*A Discourse pronounc'd the Ninth of December by Mr Dacier, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr de Harlay, Archbishop of Paris.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**F those are the most solid and most valuable Acquisitions, which enrich the Understanding, which are renew'd every Day, and exempt from the common Fate of other Possessions, what Sentiments ought I not to conceive of that Happiness, which I am going to possess! But how shall I be able to express them, or shew a Gratitude equal to a Favour, which gives me Assurances of Immortality, by calling me to partake of Your Glory? Think not, *Gentlemen*, that I shall justify Your Choice by a Discourse, answerable either to the Greatness of Your Generosity, or the Reputation of Your Society, or the Majesty of this Place, or the Expectation of this vast Number of Excellent Men, who, led by the Opinion of Your Eloquence, on these Days of Solemnity, which to You have always been so many Days of Triumph, come to pay You in Publick, by their Admiration, the same Homage, which they pay Your Writings in private. I should have taken a Resolution  
this



this Day of being silent, if the Maxims, which You follow'd, were not contrary to those of the Gods, who are said to enjoin Silence to Men. I am therefore ready, *Gentlemen*, to shew my Obedience to You, not out of a vain Confidence of being able to equal those, who have had the Honour to harangue before me in this Place, but only to convince You, that Self-Love, howsoever back'd by Your Suffrages, which might have render'd it of dangerous Consequence, has not blinded me, and that the Consideration of those Eminent Men, who have compos'd Your Illustrious Body, from its first Institution, and of those glorious Labours, which You have undertaken, permits me not one Moment to forget, how little I deserve the Favour You do me.

Contrary to the Method of Human Affairs, the Greatest of which owe their Rise usually to very small Beginnings, this Illustrious Society appear'd so considerable from its Infancy, that it drew the Eyes of the Great *Armand de Richlieu*. This Minister, by whose Dexterity all the Springs of the State were mov'd with so much Force and Address, and who by his Vigilance and Foresight seconded his Master so happily, that he humbled the Pride of Crowns, grown too haughty, suppress'd Rebellion, and by Schemes no less glorious than serviceable

viceable open'd that Scene of Wonders, the  
 Accomplishment whereof Providence had  
 reserv'd for this Reign ; this Minister, I say,  
 was pleas'd to find, that his Fortune had  
 prevented him, by laying an Object before  
 him, so worthy of his Attention, and so ne-  
 cessary to his vast Designs. Being perswaded,  
 that he had in vain laid the Foundation of a  
 Power superior to all others, if he had not,  
 by the Help of Learned Men, who alone  
 are capable of eternizing the Grandeur of  
 Empires, assur'd to himself an everlasting  
 Reputation, He embrac'd with Eagerness  
 the Protection of this rising Academy ; that  
 as the *French* had succeeded to the Valour of  
 the *Greeks* and *Romans*, they might likewise  
 succeed to their Eloquence, and He himself  
 might find within his own Bosom Men suf-  
 ficiently able to do Justice to his great Ex-  
 ploits. The Application, which he us'd, to  
 lay the Storms rais'd against this new Esta-  
 blishment, the Attention, which he brought,  
 to perfect its Statutes, and its Rules, and  
 the Care, which he took, to procure very  
 honourable Marks of the Favour and Coun-  
 tenance of LEWIS the Just, are glorious  
 Advantages for You. But he proceeded  
 farther, he shew'd himself willing to give  
 Life to all Your Designs. This Soul, whose  
 immortal Idea's have produc'd this vast  
 Work of Policy, from whence every King-  
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dom might draw Rules towards forming an happy Government, and which might still be of Use to Us in Our Conduct, had not God plac'd over us a superior Genius, who in the Art of Governing can have no other Master but himself: This Soul, that could employ it self only upon such Objects, as were proportionable to its Greatness, becomes the Soul of Your Society; and that Spirit, which, like a Deity, chang'd at his Pleasure the Face of *Europe*, labours in concert with You to refine our Language, and to free it from the Number of the Barbarous, by purging it of every thing that is low and harsh, and substituting in its place Harmony, Energy, Elegance, and Majesty.

The Death of this great Minister would either have overthrown or shaken a Body, establish'd upon less solid Foundations; but it produc'd no Alteration in Yours. You found amongst Your selves a Member capable to fill this Vacancy; an illustrious Chancellor, more conspicuous for his Virtues, his Capacity, and his Eloquence, than for his Employments, and whose Spirit seems to revive in the Person, who at present so happily supplies his Place, was found worthy to succeed this first Guardian Angel of Your Society, and, what is infinitely more glorious, to prepare the Way for a Great Prince, who after Him condescended to honour You  
with

with his August Protection, and to receive You into his own Palace. Here indeed is fulfill'd the Idea of ancient *Rome*, which plac'd the Muses in the Temple of *Hercules* their Protector. What an Honour is this to You, Gentlemen, but how great an one to Your Founder! And if in the midst of his exalted Happiness he were sensible of what pass'd upon Earth, how pleas'd would he be to see, that the wisest of Kings has adopt-ed his Work; that the Majesty of this Prince, like a bright and pure Flame, has consum'd the drossy mortal part of it; that all the Draughts of his Original are effac'd by brighter Touches, and, if I may be allow'd on this Occasion to borrow the Expression of a Poet\*, no Traces remain but those of *Jove*.

Upon considering the Men, who were at first chosen to compose this Society, one would be tempted to say, that it were impossible to supply their Places after their Death; yet we have seen a Race of great Geniuses succeed to their Posts, the last of whom being enrich'd with the Observations and Experiences of Their Predecessors, and Their Masters, are at this time more capable by their Writings to renew in all Ages

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\* *Tantumq; Jovis vestigia servat.* Ovid.



the Triumphs of *LEWIS* the Great, and by their Art to reach the Grandeur of those Actions, which are deposited in their Hands.. There never has been any Society, where we have seen so many Bright Men succeed one another with different Qualifications, but always without the least Interruption of Brightness. One might compare this continued Series of Great Men to that celebrated *Athenian Race*\*, where he, who quitted the Field, presented His Torch to his Follower.

This is the first time, Gentlemen, that You interrupt that Succession, hitherto so happily continued. The Greatness of the Loss, which You have sustain'd, has undoubtedly left You without Hopes of repairing it. Indeed, Gentlemen, You have lost a most Extraordinary Man, whose Name for so many Ages backwards, and particularly at this Day, carries with it the Idea of so many Virtues. A Man, who, notwithstanding the Advantages of a Noble Extraction, and the signal Services, which his Ancestors had done our Kings in the highest Employments, as well Civil as Military, owed nevertheless all his Grandeur to none

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\* This was a Race celebrated three times a Year at Athens, and entitled, The Race of Torches, because it was perform'd with a lighted Torch.

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but himself. His Merit and his Labours were the only Friends, who plac'd him in the most important See of this Kingdom, to which the Greatest of Kings stands subject. They only call'd him to the Sacred Purple, which Death hinder'd him from putting on, and which at the Age of Twenty Eight Years he was thought by a considerable Minister to deserve.

His Politeness was not a Surface without Depth, but the shining Outside and Emanation of many inward Qualities, equally solid, the true Sources of Moderation, Affability, Humanity, and of those Graces, whereby, to bring himself nearer to a Level with his Inferiors, he conceal'd or temper'd his Superiority, and gave Occasion to those, who had Access to him, to depart always well satisfied both with Him, and with Themselves. His Sweetness of Temper was accompanied with all that Firmness, which proceeds from sound Reason, that desires nothing more than to preserve Order, and to maintain its own Dignity.

The different Talents of the Gospel never appear'd with more Lustre than in his publick Discourses, and in his private Conferences. In these latter he gain'd Applause by his Solidity, and by the noble Simplicity, with which he explain'd the most difficult Points of Divinity, and without Obstinacy,  
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without Prejudice, without Envy, made the Abilities of other Men, as well as his own, subservient to the Discovery of Truth.

In his publick Discourses, he always equalld the Loftiness of his Subject, and with that wonderful Readiness, that it was impossible to distinguish his Extemporary Performances from such, as were labour'd by Thought and Meditation, and he discover'd in the one as well as the other, Beauty and Strength, Copiousness and Method.

This Eloquence, whether sudden or prepar'd, which never fail'd to persuade, was not only the Effect of excellent Parts, but the Fruit of much Study. By the Force of such solid Qualities, with what Success did he preside over Nine Assemblies of the Clergy? And with what Strength did he support the Interests of the Church, the King, and the State, Interests, that are inseparable under a Good Prince.

Bishops are call'd the Angels of Peace. Never did Bishop better answer this Character. It is a small Commendation to say, that he preserv'd Peace, He restor'd it. Upon his Entrance on his Episcopal Office, how many Churches were divided! These blessed Fields of Peace were brought into Desolation by Wars, and Divisions, which choak'd the holy Seed. No sooner does this

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Prelate

Prelate appear, than the Wars cease; Sweetness, Courtesy, and Persuasion bring back the Spirit of Peace and Justice, and re-establish Order, Dependence, and Submission.

What Service did He not lately do the Church, by discovering the Fallacies, and the deadly Poison of a Doctrine of Darkness, which undermines the Foundations, that Truth it self has laid, and which by removing Fear, the strongest Motive to Piety, throws Men into an abandon'd State, and lulls them into a fatal Security.

The Eloquence of this Great Man, and the uncommon Excellencies of his Mind, were gloriously rewarded by Your Assembly, which is the only Sovereign Judge of Men's Abilities, and confers such Honours upon them, as are sufficient to satisfy their Whole Ambition. But I dare tell You, *Gentlemen*, that he has merited much more from You. With what Pains, with what Monuments of Your Gratitude will You eternize, what he has done for this Society, in procuring for it the August Protection, which it enjoys, attended with that glorious Distinction, which renders it in a manner Equal to the first Companies of this Kingdom, even to those Companies, whom the King intrusts with the Administration of his Justice, and a Share of his Authority. The Muses then can no longer be thought useless or despicable,



ble, *LEWIS* the Great treats them like Sovereigns, and has restor'd to them all their Majesty, rightly considering, that Their Original is no less Divine, than that of the Laws, or that of Kings themselves.

Tho' the just Desire of nominating a more worthy Successor in the room of so Illustrious a Member, who ought to be regarded by You as the chief Source of Your Grandeur, had not oblig'd You to deny me Admittance into this August Place, yet the great Works, which You have undertaken, and which require Hands no less able than Your own, ought to have excluded me from it.

You have propos'd, *Gentlemen*, to fix for ever our Language in that Point of Perfection, where You have plac'd it; to shew the Effects of the Grandeur, the Strength, the Beauty of Oratory, join'd with the Grace of Elocution; to discover the wonderful Secrets of Poetry, and to perfect Eloquence, that Sovereign of the World, whom *Rome* and *Athens* have not been able to cloath with all that Majesty, which She has a Right to claim.

This Design, how noble soever in it self, becomes much more so, by the End which You have propos'd to your selves of employing all Your Talents to immortalize the Glory of Your Protector. This, *Gentlemen*,

is to devote Eloquence to Her proper Use, to employ her in a manner suitable to her Original, as She is the Daughter of Truth.

Never can we present her with an Object more worthy of her, than with that of a King, who is perswaded, that Men are no otherwise Great, than as they are Just, who looks upon his Subjection to God, as the Source and Bounds of his Authority over Men, and who, as absolute as his Power is, always suffers himself to be restrain'd by the Laws of the Land, and directed by the Rules of Wisdom. What Sight can be more lovely, and more worthy of Your Encomiums, than a Man, whose Soul God has illuminated, \* to use the Words of a great Prophet; who, tho' the Greatest of Kings by his Birth, by the Dignity of his Crown, by his Victories, and by the Extent of his Dominions, is yet much Greater by the Examples, which He affords us. He it is, who by discharging all the Duty of a true King, who is properly the Minister of God for the Happiness of his People, has broke the Chains of an hereditary Heresy, which bound a great Part of his Subjects, and has darted a Ray of Light upon those, who lay in Darkness.

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\* Ma. lviii. 11.

A Multitude of Nations enrag'd at the brightness of his Virtues, engag'd themselves in a Conspiracy to execute the most horrid Attempt, that was ever form'd, and pour in all their Forces upon this Kingdom with the frightful Noise of Whirlwinds, Tempests, and Fire.

L E W I S the Great, supported by the invisible Hand, which had always been his Buckler, and his Protection, makes head without any other Assistance against this Crowd of Enemies; in proportion as this Hydra encreases, the Force and Courage of this Prince redoubles. The very opposing so many united Powers, had been a very glorious Triumph, but his Piety moves the Lord of Hosts to crown Him with surprising Victories, which He never expected from his own Arm.

In the Eight Year of this War, which threaten'd *France* with Ruin, we every where find Trophies of Victories. Our Enemies, who, by joining their Arms against us, were already dividing this Kingdom, find us Masters of a great many of Their Provinces, and of an infinite Number of Their Towns, which we turn against them on all Sides. Such is the Effect of Wisdom, seconded by Courage, Patience, and Magnanimity. Such is the Power of a Prince, whom nothing dispirits, whom no Storm

disturbs, who is the Genius of his Councils, and of his Armies, whose Life is a continued Course of Labour, and whose Prudence mitigates the Laws of the most imperious Necessity, those severe Laws of War.

What new Strength Fortune has lately gather'd against this Prince, was only, that She might not always oppose him with Armies already defeated, that She might the more signalize His numerous Successes by a mixture of Adversity, as Painters by the help of Shades set their Pieces in a better Light. In this manner She proceeded with the first of the *Cæsars*, and the most finish'd Generals, whose Names have made so considerable a Noise in the World. But the more the Confederacy strives to revive their lost Courage upon retaking only one of their Towns, after Seven Years ill Success, the more they teach us, what a Spirit of Bravery and Assurance we should put on, after all Our Advantages.

What Hopes may we not conceive of a War, remarkable for so many Wonders? Of an holy War, which was enter'd into with no other View, than to disperse an unjust Confederacy, to protect a King driven from His Throne, and to secure the Triumph of Religion.

The King, who is sensibly touch'd with the Miseries of *Europe*, to which he is unwillingly



willingly oblig'd to contribute, and opposes Injustice only to procure a Peace for Her, which he has so often already given Her, has long ago made our Enemies Offers of very reasonable Terms; but They, through a blind Confidence of their own Strength, have the Obstinacy to reject them. This Madness will last, till God satisfied with the Labours and Fidelity of a King, who serves none but Him, whilst so many Princes and Catholick Kings pay Homage to a Man, and such a Man, as uses his utmost Efforts to overthrow Religion: This Madness I say, will last, till God lays aside the Instruments of Vengeance, with which the crying Sins of the Earth have arm'd him, till he heal the Nations, and by pouring forth his Spirit upon the Princes, dispel the Mist, with which they are blinded. Then according to the Prediction of a great Prophet, the Prediction of a Truth unchangeable, and applicable to all Times, Justice shall succeed Iniquity, Peace shall be the Work of Justice, and the Effects of Justice shall be Quietness and Security for ever\*. Then Happy shall we be, that we have been able to give our King such Marks of our Love, and of our Gratitude, after having receiv'd

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\* Isa. xxxii 17.

so many of His Care, and of His Goodness; Happy for having manifested by an ever fervent Zeal, that we plac'd our true Glory in shewing our selves worthy Subjects of so worthy a King, then we shall reap the Fruits of His Wisdom with Tranquility, and after having seen with our own Eyes so many Actions, which advance the Grandeur of *France*, and engage our Admiration, we shall still see those, which will advance our Happiness, and engage our Benedictions, and Encomiums.

This, Gentlemen, is the fruitful Subject of Your Labours, and such as may raise Your Glory to an higher Pitch; for the strong Light of Heroick Enterprises reflects its Brightness upon those, who celebrate them. By transmitting the History of this Reign to Posterity, You will become in all Ages the Benefactors of all People, and of all Kings. To the former You will leave Eternal Lessons of Love, Fidelity, and Zeal, and to the latter immortal Examples of Goodness, Justice, Greatness of Soul, and Generosity. My Performances, by no means comparable to those, which You have writ in the same Kind, have given You no Reason to expect, that I should bear any Share in Your Labours, You have, without doubt, reckon'd upon nothing but my Zeal, which, as it is infinitely passionate for the Glory of the

the King, cannot but be exceeding affectionate for Your Society, that is in a particular manner devoted to Him. My Gratitude is no longer confin'd to any Limits; it will last, Gentlemen, as long as my Life, and were I Master of Your Talents, it should be as Immortal as Your Favour.

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*A Discourse pronounc'd the 12th of November 1693. by Mr. Du Bois, when he was admitted into the Place of Mr. Novion.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**F it be true, that nothing more flatters, the Vanity of Men, than what may give them a good Opinion of their own Parts, to what Danger am I expos'd? Who can avoid thinking favourably of me, when they see me elevated by Your Suffrages to That, which all the World allows to be the highest Recompence of a Proficiency in Knowledge: Even I, tho' I have more than enough upon this Occasion to suggest against the Illusions of Self-Love, I find my self seduc'd by it; and I forget what I am, when I suffer my Thoughts in the least to reflect upon the Honour, You have done me.

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I know its full Value, and who indeed can be ignorant of it? You associate me to all the Gentlemen, the most distinguish'd for Sublimity of Genius, for all the Ornaments of Eloquence, for all the Graces of Poetry, for all the Treasures of Knowledge. You admit me into a Society, Illustrious for the most eminent Dignities of Church and State, whose Decisions are pass'd by Voices worthy to pronounce the Oracles of Councils, and where You see plac'd by Your Side, what the Church of *France* esteems an Honour to have at her Head.

Such is at present, *Gentlemen*, the Fame of the *French* Academy; and what could be less expected from the Establishment of a Society, receiv'd from its Birth into the Bosom of the Great Cardinal *Richlieu*, whose Cares and Application were divided betwixt That and the State, foster'd after his Decease by a Chancellor, whose Merit was equal to his Dignity, and at last adopted by the King, who was pleas'd to declare himself Your Protector, and has fixt Your Assemblies, even within the Sanctuary of his Royal Palace, where I find my self in the midst of You.

Methinks, *Gentlemen*, such an Honour could receive no Addition: But You still enhance it, in giving me a Place, which I am asham'd to take, when I think, how  
You



You have seen it fill'd by an Illustrious Magistrate \*, of a Merit, that had rais'd him to the Height of the most August Tribunal of Justice ; of a Name, that was in Possession of the highest Dignities of the Sword, as well as of the Robe ; of a Fidelity Hereditary, and inviolable for his King in the most difficult Times ; of an easy Wit, of a lively and concise Eloquence ; of a Capacity equal to the Greatness of his Employments ; and whose Change of Fortune has only shew'd to convince the World, that he was as much Master of the Virtues of a Private Life, as of Those belonging to the Magistrate.

This, *Gentlemen*, is what You have done for me, to which the Unanimity of Your Voices adds such a high Degree of Value, as the most singular Merit could scarce have presum'd upon it, which obliges me to pay my Acknowledgements to every one in particular for the Honour, that I receive from All.

But as it is easie to discern my Obligations, so much more difficult it is to express my Sense of them : It is only from You, *Gentle-*

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\* *Mr. de Blanc Meuil President, Grandfather to Mr. de Novion was upon the Point of being sacrific'd to the Fury of the League, with Mr. Brisson, President.*

men, that one learns to speak handsomely upon such a Subject ; and that I might do it in a manner proportionable to my Sense of it, I ought to have been some Time amongst You, to have receiv'd the Advantage of Your Abilities, and by Your learned Instructions, to have made some Progress in an Art, of which You are already the Masters, and which can raise the Power of Language to be equal to the liveliest Sentiments, or the sublimest Thoughts.

Till then, Gentlemen, expect nothing from me, that may either answer My Obligation, or justify Your Choice. It is only amongst You, that we become worthy of it, and they are Your Lessons, and Your Examples, which compleat the Merit of those, whom You have rais'd to an Height equal with Your own ; as it is the Hand of the Statuary, which gives the chief Price to the Matter he works upon, however rich its intrinsic Value may be.

Content Your selves therefore, Gentlemen, with a Disposition docile, and attentive to all Your rare Productions, to Your constant Application in cultivating that Eloquence, which has been deposited in Your Hands to bring it to its full Perfection.

What have not You done for it already ? And how much is it indebted to You ? Your first Endeavours were to finish our Language ;

guage; and as all the Art of Eloquence could draw no Assistance from One, that is rude and uninform'd, no more than a skilful Musician from an Instrument, that is un-run'd, and without Harmony, You have accomplish'd Your Design, Gentlemen, in that Point, and not satisfied with having purg'd the *French* Language of whatever was gross and vulgar, You have made it copious, and render'd it capable of supporting every Attempt of Eloquence. For a Proof of this we need only peruse Your Works; it is there, that it is to be seen in that high Degree of Purity, and Force, Majesty, and Delicacy, to which You have rais'd it; from whence all the living Languages pay it an Homage; which can never be more visible than by the Honour they esteem it in all the Courts in *Europe* to understand, and to speak it.

What remains but to fix it where it is, and to render it secure of Immortality? It is this, that You have found out the Means of accomplishing; the celebrated Dictionary, that is just ready to appear in Publick, and that has nothing of Vulgar, but the Name, will be as an impregnable Rampart against whatever shall attempt a Change in it.

But what You have done for the Language, is the least Part of what You have per-

perform'd for the Advancement of Eloquence.

You have banish'd all those Boyish Affectations, that were the Amusements of the Infancy, wherein You found it, and all that Pomp of Learning, which was but a Supplement to a Dearth of Thought. You have divested it of that unbecoming Dress of florid Expressions, that was so agreeable to the Prejudices in Vogue at the beginning of this Century, and You have reduc'd it to that noble Simplicity, which, assur'd of its own Worth and Merit, disdains all Forreign Ornaments.

In short, You have learn'd us, that, to speak elegantly, we need only to understand the Language, and to think justly; and that those Discourses are the most perfect, where the Elevation and Connexion of the Thoughts gives the least occasion for Attention to the Words; and which the bare Necessity of passing thro' the Senses to come at the Mind distinguishes from the Language of Angels.

This, Gentlemen, is, what was expected from the Establishment of this Learned Academy; and this is, what You have so happily accomplish'd. And indeed this nervous and significative Eloquence alone was proper to be employ'd in setting forth the Glory of a Monarch, whose real and natural



ral Excellencies need no Embellishment of Words; and whose truest Panegyrick is a plain Narrative of his Life.

Far from seeking to raise the Lustre of his Actions by the Succours of Eloquence, Your only Trouble is rather to lessen it, in Compliance with the Weakness of our Eyes. For what Eye would not be dazzled at what the Zeal for his Religion, as well as the Care of his own Glory, and of his Kingdom, have oblig'd him to do, to break the Efforts of a League, which by a sort of Magick found out the Secret to cement so many opposite Interests, and different Religions, and to raise against him almost all the Powers of *Europe*. But to what Purpose did it serve? Only to force the King to display that Valour, which had been long restrain'd by his Moderation, and to let them see by his Conquests over so many Enemies in Conjunction, what he could perform against them Separately.

How many Successes, by Sea and Land, during this last Campaign? How many Towns conquer'd? How many Battels won? And what Victory can be more glorious and compleat, than that which the King lately gain'd in *Piedmont*? How low has it reduc'd a Prince, who, fierce with a borrow'd Power, durst measure it with that of our Master? Happy, if His Disgraces could make him  
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sensible, that there is no Safety for him, but in His Majesty's Favour.

The whole Life of this Great Monarch is a Series of the like Wonders ; but I dare say, that which raises all the Glory of Other Princes, obscures His ; and that he is always a Loser, when the Fame of his Exploits calls off our Attention from his inward Virtues.

What a beautiful Scene do they display ! What a Prodigy was the Allegiance, which he made in his younger Days, of the greatest Power, and the greatest Moderation ! What an Object is a Power without Bounds, under the Guidance of Reason, that is so perfectly subject to the most severe Laws, I don't say of Humanity, but even of Courtesy and Politeness, that in all the King's Life there never fell from him one single Word, which could afflict the meanest of those, who had the Honour to approach him.

This is, what finishes in the King the Character of a True Hero, and distinguishes Him in a glorious manner from the false Heroes, whose Virtue consists only in Fierceness and Insolence.

If we esteem in other Men the Appearance of Modesty, altho' for the most part it is but the Effect of their Impotency, and their Insignificancy, who can ever sufficiently admire That of a Prince, whose Will  
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is a Law, and has no Restraint but that of his Wisdom?

What other Virtue could resist so strong a Temptation? Who would not yield, some time or other, to that too natural Desire of making others feel, at the Expence of Humanity, that He is their Master?

What Thanks then have not we to return to Heaven, for having bestow'd on Us a Prince, who remembers, he is more a Father, than he is a Master, and who will not be otherwise, no more than God, who in commanding us to call him our Father, lets us see to what he reduces the Sovereign Power, to which he has a Right by so many Titles!

What a Treasure for the People is a Prince, who frames himself upon such a Model? And who knowing, that a Father ought to provide for his Children, has the same Care over his Subjects, as God has to supply the Wants of his Creatures; and prepare, even in the midst of his Palace, what is necessary for them.

You owe, Gentlemen, to Posterity the Portraiture of this great Soul. His Exploits will be transmitted to them by the Voice of Fame, tho' You should neglect this important Charge; but it belongs to You to deliver down to them, for the Instruction of

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future Kings, what we admire the most in Ours.

Hereby You will teach them, what they ought to be; and that in vain they will aspire after Glory by the false Lights of Valour, and Magnificence, unless, like *LEWIS* the Great, they join to them a Love for their People, an Attention to their Necessities, and a steady Application towards rendering them Happy.

May He be more and more actuated by such noble Inclinations! May He incessantly make Advances in this sort of Glory, far more pure and solid than any he can attain to by other Means! May He, even to the Hundredth Year of his Reign, make such Examples shine in the Eyes of those Princes, into whom with his Blood he has transfus'd the Seeds of his Virtues; and may Your Eloquence pursue upon so lofty a Subject the Impulses of Your Zeal and Affection.

*A Diss.*



*A Discourse pronounc'd the 19th of  
August 1694 by Mr Boileau Abbot,  
when he was admitted into the Place  
of Mr Du Bois.*

*Gentlemen,*

**I**T is apparently the Effect of Your prudent Foresight to require the Person, who enters into this Illustrious Society, to begin with a publick Acknowledgment, which may serve for a Proof both of his Merit and of his Gratitude. I am sensible, that nothing would be more capable of exciting Thoughts of Vanity, were it not for the Difficulty of making a Discourse, answerable, I don't say, to the Brightness of Your Parts, but to the Sentiments of My Heart. You have prevented all Emotions of Pride, which so honourable a Place might raise in me. Persons the most Eminent find here their Equals, and the most Skilful their Masters. Titles give no Distinction, nor Reputation Superiority. It is Learning that ennobles, Criticism, that sets upon a Level, Wit, that distinguishes, and good Sense, that over-rules.

The Man, who is us'd to triumph in Other Assemblies, finds himself at a Loss in Yours; he is convinc'd of the wide Difference be-

twixt popular Esteem and Your Approbation; and when one imagines, that he is almost arriv'd at the Perfection of Stile, he is surpris'd to see, how far short he falls of the Purity of Expression.

I declare, Gentlemen, I am not ambitious to partake of Your Honours, but to profit by Your Instructions. May I say, that I would renounce the Glory of Your Society for the Advantage of Your Censures? If it is not allow'd Me to imitate Your Masterpieces, neither will it be allow'd You to suffer My Faults. If the Favour, I receive, puts me in a Condition to improve my Judgment, the Honour, You do me, lays You under the Necessity to inform it. It is true, the Glory of being Your Disciple might be sufficient, without entertaining any further Views; for it is in reality a Mark of Distinction amongst Men of Sense to have the Privilege of being corrected by You.

It is the Design of the most celebrated Establishment, that ever was in the Empire of Learning, to assemble a select Number of bright Geniuses, to form some, to perfect others; to qualify them to speak either to Posterity, in the Courts of Justice, or in the Pulpits. This was the Design of the Great *Richlieu*, whose Understanding was so vast, I would say, unlimited, if the Mind of Man was capable of being so; in which Nature  
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intended to shew, what it was possible for a Great Man to perform in an high Station; he exerted all his own Merit, and made that of others tributary to his own, that the State might be happy, Religion triumphant, and His Name famous; he made polite Learning flourish as well thro' Inclination as Interest, and affected to preside over it; which indeed was due to the Force of his Penetration; he lov'd Eloquence for her self, and Those, who were Eloquent, as they bore a Resemblance to Him; superior to his Employments, able to play all the Springs, to find out all the Expedients, and to conceal all the Artifices; having always in his Designs Posterity in View, in his Works Immortality, Religion for the Foundation, and Glory for the Motive.

Having built the *Sorbonne*, and founded the Academy, he gave a Temple to Religion, and a Throne to Eloquence. He preserv'd to the Language of the Church, whatever is most Majestick, and most Sacred, and procur'd for that of the State, whatever is most polite and agreeable. I speak of this Cardinal so famous for the Services, which he did to *France*, which he govern'd as he would a Family; and capable of governing the Universe, as he govern'd this Nation. One dares not display all his Encomiums, out of respect to the

Authority, which he shar'd. But can any thing be more happy for a Monarch, than to find such a Minister, any thing more wise than to make Choice of him, and any thing more wonderful than to have no Need of him?

It was then the Design of the Great *Armand* to form Orators, and especially for the Profession of my Ministry, wherein He himself had the Honour to be employ'd.

After his Death his Intentions were prosecuted by the Illustrious *Segnier*, who, after having determin'd Causes, came to attend Your Decisions; after having pronounc'd Oracles, and even Prodigies of Eloquence, came amongst You to receive Your Lessons of it. In the same Palace, where he was President of the King's Council, more by his Prudence, than his Quality, he assisted at Your Conferences, where he carried it only by the Strength of his Reason. But that, which demonstrated the Strength of his Reason, was, that very oft he did not carry it. He had the Pleasure of the Controversy, and the Glory of Submitting.

The sole Glory, to which I have any Claim, especially succeeding a celebrated Writer, a faithful Translator, not only of the Heathen Morality, but of the Evangelical Wisdom. It had been too little for me, that he had learn'd us, what a good Man ought



ought to do in Civil Society by his Version of *Tully's Offices*. It would not have suffic'd to have instructed us, what is requir'd in a Christian Life by translating the Epistles of *St. Austin*. But, when he gave us his Sermons, he shew'd us in a learned Preface, after what manner a Preacher ought to deliver the Gospel.

You have chosen me, Gentlemen, to fill the Place of this Excellent Man. His Merit makes me sensible of my Deficiencies, and His Work makes me perceive my Failings. If I could not come up to his Character, You thought, I should pursue his Design; if I cannot tread in his Steps, I shall apply my self at least to his Rules; not knowing how to find him a Successor, You have agreed to find him a Disciple. The only Way, whereby I can attain to his Merit, is, to follow his Maxims, and it is the only Means, whereby I can pretend to any Part in Yours. But as Death prevented him from receiving the Benefit of Your Advice, permit me to say, that I will consult the Fathers of the Church to know, if the Rules, which he laid down, be conformable to their Principles with respect to Religion: And I will consult You, Gentlemen, to know, if they are conformable to Yours for Eloquence, You, who are entrusted with the Care of bringing it to Perfection.

What sort of Eloquence had got Possession of the Pulpit before Your Establishment? We refuse to read the Works of the most Celebrated Men; we blush for our Forefathers. No Taste, no Edification: Scripture wrested to a contrary Sense, and this Counter-sense was their Wit: Forc'd Applications pass'd for Ingenious. There is not the Language of Nature, much less of Grace. They could not bear an easy, and, if I may be allow'd to say it, a rational Stile. But You have at last reinstated Reason in the Pulpit: there was a Necessity of superior Geniuses to reconcile the Age to good Sense. Then those useless Citations, the tedious Ostentation of Learning, those Ornaments, that serve only to set forth the Orator, those Turns, that would not bear the Test of Reflexion, were entirely banish'd. You have introduc'd Politeness without Affectation. You have left to the Word of God all its Force, and restor'd to that of Men all its Reason.

It is true, that the Gospel is not servilely bound to Human Rules; that too nice a Structure of Words might be culpable. It is not the Application of Man, that makes Converts. A certain Sublimity of Stile, that seems to disdain Eloquence, the irregular Agitations of the Spirit of God, affect us more than the Pre-meditation of Orators; and

and sometimes what would be a Negligence in Them, would be an Ornament for Us.

But as in these happy Sallies, one speaks habitually, what an Advantage must it be to be conversant with those, who speak purely ! I am satisfy'd we are not permitted to suit our selves to the Nicety of an Audience for the Moral Part ; but we are permitted to please their Ears, provided we do not flatter their Consciences ; and if it is not necessary to chuse the finest Expressions, it is however necessary, that we should avoid the meanest. What a Glory is it for a Man of this Profession to have such Masters concern'd for his Success, to have a Right to demand Your Advice, especially having the weighty Task of pronouncing the Truths of Christianity in the politest Court, that ever was. I demand, Gentlemen, Your unanimous Succours, as I had those of Your Suffrages, You, who are employ'd about the Virtues of the Greatest King in the World. It is true, that it will not be my Business to praise Him. It is his Will, that we speak to him from the Pulpit of the Immortal Monarch, and that the Ministers of the living God appear before Him with the Character of his Embassadors ; his Piety draws a Veil over his Glory. Happy, that being conscious of it before Men, he knows the worthlessness of it before God.

You

You are, Gentlemen, the Guardians of his Glory, not that he commands You to publish it; Modesty seeks no Penegyrist. But because the Publick esteems You the Judges of Language, it is expected, that You teach us the Terms, that are fit to express his Praises. The only Difficulty will be the Choice of Words. It is sufficient for a *Frenchman* to know well how to speak his Language, that he may speak handsomely of his King; and it is enough, that You are entrusted with the Charge of our Language, that You may be the proper Depositories of His Encomiums.

How shall they be celebrated, as one could wish? You call Assemblies, and confess, that the Subject is superiour to Your Art. All *Europe* is combin'd to oppose Him, and all *Europe* acknowledges its Weakness. The *Academy* assembles to praise Him, and the *Academy* confesses its Inability. So many Enemies cannot vanquish Him; so many Orators cannot praise Him. Envy cannot obscure his Glory, nor Eloquence make any Addition to it. His Enemies will cease to Fight Him, but You will not cease to praise Him. Their Efforts will be suppress'd, Your Zeal redoubl'd; Their Devices will have an End, Your Encomiums shall last for ever.

As



As for me, Gentlemen, who am not accustomed to make any Compliments, give me Leave to tell You my Thoughts. I would prefer the Natural Style to the Sublime. Let us lay aside pompous Expressions; let us not think of publishing, what is marvellous, but of persuading, what is true. Let us Act, not as if we spoke to Subjects prepossess'd, but to sincere Enemies. Let us quit all the Figures of Rhetorick; let us prevent any Scruple, that may arise about the Force of Words.

They say, that Posterity can never believe, what You affirm of the King. The Answer will be, that what is related by so many Witnesses must be believ'd. It will be believ'd upon the Authority of the whole World. Let us only add, that the Example of our King makes the great Exploits of the *Alexanders* and the *Cæsars* no longer appear incredible.

Some go on to maintain, that we can never tell the Number of his Victories; and I allow, that it is possible to Summ them up. But we cannot sometimes make so exact a Calculation, but one or other will be omitted and forgot; and that, which is overlook'd, and omitted, would Alone make an Hero.

Let

Let us not say, there are no Terms sufficient to express his Excellencies. There must be such for the Perfections of God ; but for *LEWIS* the Great there are none, that surpass our Ideas : Or if there be, they are such, as do not belong to Mortals.

It is every Day asserted, that we must abate something of His Wonders to make them appear probable. Discover the Truth of his Heart, and You will evidence the Probability of His Wonders : Begin to describe his Person ; they will give Credit to His Conquests : Say well, what He is ; and they will believe, what He has done.

They proceed to urge, that in this respect, Poetry has no Fiction, nor Rhetorick any Figures. Let us grant, that the Imagination of Man can more easily invent, than Judgment can perform. But all the World must at the same time agree, that to display what is marvellous in his History, there needs no Help either from the Artifice of the Orator, or the Fiction of the Poet.

Let the brightest Geniuses of the *Romans* publish of *Pompey*, that he had won more Battles, than others had read ; this Expression astonishes those, who hear it. I only ask, who has ever read, that a Prince, attack'd at once by so many Potentates, has taken so many Towns, and won so many Battles,

Battles, He Alone against all, and He Alone Conqueror.

There is one Word above all the rest, upon which I beg leave to consult You. It does not suit in my Judgment with the King's Panegyrick; it is the Word of His good Fortune. They are always saying, the lucky Fate of the King, his good Fortune, and his happy Star. All these Terms, I must own, appear to me to be foreign to Him. His good Fortune is his Diligence, it is His assiduous Application to the Affairs of Government, it is His Genius, that foresees every thing, that provides for every thing; an impenetrable Secrecy, and an exact Vigilance. His good Fortune, if You will, is the Goodness of His Cause, which engages Heaven on his Side; it is the Sincerity of His Intentions; it is His Dexterity in War, His Desire for Peace; that Penetration, which renders all the Enterprises of his Enemies abortive, and His own successful; His Firmness in his own Afflictions, his Concern for Ours; the tender Affection, that he has for his People, and that his People has for him. That is the Star, which presides over his Councils; that it is, which makes him the Happiest and the Greatest of Kings.

It

It is that Happiness, which depends not on the Caprice of Fortune, which seems to dispose of Victory, which over-rules the Fickleness of Events, which makes an Advantage even of Disappointments. His Happiness is His Wisdom, and Ours in His Safety. His Happiness is His Skill in the Art of Government, in inspiring His Soldiers with Courage, and His Judges with Justice; His Discernment of Mankind, and His suiting Places to Capacities. Search out the Merit of *LEWIS*, and You will come acquainted with His Fortune; and I will allow them to call it His Star, when they prove to me, that the Star produces Virtue. Other Princes perhaps may have been more Fortunate, but none more Happy than He.

There have been Heroes, who have pushed their Conquests further; but the Glory of Moderation was a sort of Glory unknown to Them. There have been Princes, who have had Empires more extended; but there never was any, who had a more absolute Sway over the Hearts of the People.

Let us abandon Art, and keep closely to Nature. You find, Gentlemen, that it is difficult to publish his Glory; my Duty is to bring him to despise it. You have the whole Universe on your Side, but I have  
his



his Piety on mine. More than happy in my Ministry, if I could inspire into his Subjects the same Zeal for God, that they have for Him.

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*A Discourse upon the Excellency and Usefulness of Academical Exercises, pronounc'd in the French Academy, by Mr. Charpentier, Dean of the Academy, on the 3d. of June 1695. and address'd to the Bishop Count of Noyon, Peer of France, the Kings Counsellor in Ordinary in his Council of State, upon his Admission into the French Academy.*

*My Lord,*

**T**HE Honour, which You have done the French Academy, by accepting a Place in it, hath remarkably distinguish'd in our Annals the Thirteenth of December last. But give me leave to tell You, my Lord, that this Honour is in some Measure Reciprocal. Not that I can expect to hinder the Vulgar from asking, how a Person of an Illustrious Extraction; a Person possess'd of the most eminent

eminent Dignity in the Church; One, who  
 has his Rank amongst the Peers of *France* ;  
 Who fills one of the first Places in the Kings  
 Council ; And is belov'd and esteem'd by  
 that Great Monarch, can receive any Ho-  
 nour from the Title of Member of the Aca-  
 demy. And I pretend not to refute such  
 low Ideas, as are form'd in Minds prepos-  
 sess'd by popular Opinions. But if any of  
 them were worthy of an Answer, I would  
 ask in my Turn, what Honour does the  
 Title of Protector of the *French* Academy,  
 in the Person of *LEWIS* the Great, add  
 to the August Appellations of Monarch, of  
 Most Christian King, of Conqueror, of Le-  
 gislator, of Invincible, of Wise, and of the  
 Father of his People ? What does this New  
 Quality add to so many glorious Epithets,  
 some whereof are deriv'd from his Birth,  
 and others acquir'd by His Virtues ? If He  
 condescended to be Protector of the *Academy*,  
 why should we wonder, that You was plea-  
 sed to be a Member of it ? Further ; Can  
 it be imagin'd, that His Majesty and Your  
 self would have enter'd into so strict a Re-  
 lation with this Society, without very suffi-  
 cient Reason ? I shall never be of that Opi-  
 nion, whilst I am convinc'd so clearly of the  
 contrary. You consented, My Lord, to be  
 a Member of the Academy, to shew the  
 strong Passion You always had for Polite  
 Learning ;

Learning. And *LEWIS* the Great declar'd himself Protector of the *Academy*, to shew the great Esteem he had for those Illustrious Arts, which so eminently distinguish the Dominions of a Most Christian King from the vast Empires of the *Mahometan* Princes. And indeed, that Multitude of People, of Provinces, of Republicks, and of Kingdoms, comprehended under the same Dominion, what is it but a Confusion of Power, uneasy to the Master, burdensome to the Subjects, grievous to the Vanquish'd, especially when the Harshness of a forc'd Submission is not temper'd by the Softness of the polite Sciences, which are the Fruits of the most refin'd Reason? It is but too true, that this Calamity has befallen that noble Part of the World, which was heretofore the Abode of the Muses and Graces. The *Ottoman* Empire has not render'd it self so odious, by the Usurpation of so many Thrones from their Lawful Princes, as by the Banishment of all the Polite Arts from *Greece*, where they took their Rise. *Parnassus* is now no better than a Forrest, inhabited by Salvage Beasts; the Fountain of *Hippocrene* is now dried up, or serves only to form an offensive Morass at the Foot of that Mountain once so Sacred; the Barbarity of the People appears in every thing; and this is one of the most lamentable Mis-

fortunes of that City, which was honour'd so long with the Appellation of *New Rome*. In Truth, the *Ottoman* Policy has not a little contributed to this Desolation. Such Warlike Politicks disdain'd Arts and Sciences; and I cannot help thinking, that God permitted this ill Taste to spread amongst them, without which there would have been Room to apprehend, that their Advantage over us had been too considerable, and that Their Sect had grown too formidable, if the Force of Eloquence had been united with the Power of the Sword in the Support of it. What would become of Us, if the fine Genius reign'd under the Turban; and if the Descendants of those Ancient *Greeks*, so superior to other Nations by their Learning and Eloquence, had preserv'd that Prerogative, under their Change of Government and Religion.

Providence observ'd another Method in Establishing the Christian Religion in the same Parts of the World. That Holy and Pure Religion adopted from the Beginning the *Grecian* Eloquence and Poetry; and whilst She was destroying the Altars erected to the Gods of *Homer* and *Hesiod*, She made no Scruple to allow the Faithful the Use of the Inimitable Productions of those Eminent Persons, who seem'd design'd by Nature for the Improvement of Human Understanding



ing. She would not suffer so many Excellent Works to be had in Abhorrence by Her Children, who were taught how to employ them to Advantage, and how to avoid being corrupted by them. Wherefore none, except the avow'd Enemies of Christianity, interdicted its Professors the Use of them. I advance nothing, my Lord, but what You are already inform'd of, by Your profound Knowledge in Ecclesiastical History. You know, into what Disorder the Emperor *Julian* fell, when he abandon'd the Religion of *Constantine*, and return'd to the Errors of *Paganism*. He was a Prince of a Sublime Genius, of Infinite Literature, and of so distinguish'd a Merit, that it drew even the Admiration of his Enemies; Notwithstanding all these Eminent Talents, God suffer'd him to plunge himself into the deepest of all Abysses, I mean Apostacy, which hath for ever render'd his Name infamous to Posterity. During the Violence of his Rage against the Christians, he prohibited the Explication of *Homer* publickly in their Schools, and his Edict is still extant amongst his Works, where in the Bitterness of his Raillery, he says, the Christians should content themselves with teaching their Youth the Gospels of *Matthew* and *Luke*, and let alone that Poet, since they rejected the Deities, which he treats of.

This Interdiction was esteem'd equal to a Persecution, and it was the general Opinion, that this Emperor could not give a more incontestable Proof of his Hatred to the Christians, than by depriving them of the Benefits, which they might receive from the Study of this Excellent Author, who contains the Seeds of all Sorts of Erudition and Politeness. From hence it is plain, that our Predecessors in Christianity would not abandon the Study of polite Learning; and that the Church in her Infancy profited by the Spoils of *Paganism*, as the *Israelites* applied to their Use the precious Riches of the *Egyptians*. This further appears from the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, St. *Justin* the Martyr, *Anethagoras*, *Tatian*, *Tertullian*, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Origen*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, whose Eloquence conduc'd so much to the Advancement of Religion; and tho' the Great Apostle has said, that the Success of his Mission was not owing to the Assistance of the persuasive Expressions of Human Wisdom, there is no room to imagine, that he intended absolutely to exclude from the Evangelical Function those Ingenious Insinuations, those convincing Methods of Reasoning, which Mankind have invented to Persuade, because he himself employs them in the Discourse he pronounc'd in the Middle of the

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*Areopagus*, when he Preach'd to the *Athenians* the Knowledge of the true God, and the principal Articles of our Faith, where he takes Occasion to make mention of the Altars dedicated to the Unknown God, which he observ'd in passing through the City; After which he quotes a Verse out of one of their own Poets, as a Domestick Testimony, to prepare them for a more favourable Reception of what he design'd to reveal to them, and that he might declare afterwards with the greater Efficacy, that the God they ador'd without knowing him, was the same God he had made known to them. In like manner, the greatest Part of the Christians, who succeeded the Disciples of the Apostles, entertain'd a Commerce with the Philosophers, and more particularly with *Plato*, for whom they had a singular Reverence and Esteem. They firmly believ'd, that the Doctrine of this Philosopher, in whom they found so much Elevation and Virtue, was not repugnant to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and even of Jesus Crucified; especially in reading in the Second Book of his Republick, *that when the Just should come into the World, without appearing such in the Eyes of Men, He should be bound, beaten, scourg'd, and at last crucified*; for is not this the History of Jesus Christ abrig'd, who being the Just by way of Excellence, and

coming into the World in a corrupt Generation, that knew him not, suffer'd a Death so conformable to that, which *Plato* foretold of the Just in general. Why then should not we think, that it pleas'd God to raise to that Height the Idea of this Philosopher, that he might by Reasoning be able to confound those, to whom the Cross should appear a Scandal and a Folly ; because it was a Demonstration of the Sanctity of our Saviour, and the Iniquity of the *Jews*. And the Name of *Pagan*, which is so odious in religious Matters, ought not upon this Occasion to be objected to *Plato*, since the Fathers believ'd the *Sybills*, who were Heathens, to be inspir'd, and the Church makes no Scruple in her Form of Prayers to join one of their Testimonies with the Authority of the Royal Prophet. As much may be said of *Hystaspes*, that ancient King of the *Medes*, mention'd by St. *Justin* the Martyr, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, and *Lactantius*, who, altho' an Heathen, had said Things so consistent with our Religion, that *Clement* refers Idolaters to Him in order to their Conversion. For this Reason the Heathen Priests interdicted the reading of Him upon Pain of Death, which St. *Justin* the Martyr attributes to the Malice of the Devils, who desir'd for ever to retain Mankind in the Bonds of their Tyranny. So, tho' the Voice of the  
Thunder,



Thunder, which was heard on Mount *Sinai*, be alone sufficient to convince Atheists, and to prove the Existence of a God, will it follow from thence, that this Truth should not be insinuated to Men by those Reasonings, which *Socrates* employ'd on this Subject? Reasonings so admirable, so just, so convincing, that after the Authority of Revelation the Fathers employ'd no other; And this, far from being Matter of Reproach to the Holy Doctors, is on the contrary an incontestable Argument of the Truth of their Doctrine, and of the Necessity of subscribing to it. For if a Philosopher, by the Force of Reason alone, was able to form such distinct Notions of a Deity, with how much greater Deference should they be heard, who, by the Assistance of the Light of Revelation, have so far surpass'd the Bounds of the Light of Nature. So, tho' we are taught in the School of Jesus Christ, that *Blessed are those, who are persecuted for Righteousness sake*, is it any Disrespect to that Oracle to acknowledge, that almost the same Thought is found in the Greek Philosophers? where they say, *It is better to suffer than to commit Injustice, because He, who suffers Injustice, may be a Virtuous Man, whereas He, who commits it, must be a Vicious one*. Likewise, when we read in the Gospel the Dreadful Sentence denounc'd against the Rich, that *it is easier*

for a Camel to pass thro' the Eye of a Needle, than for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. May it not be said, that these Philosophers have not been more favourable to such dangerous Riches, when they declare so boldly, *That Good Fortune is more to be fear'd than Ill?* A Decision, so repugnant to Nature, was not pronounc'd without a perfect Knowledge of the Merits of the Cause, nor with the bare Design of making a Paradox. It is grounded upon an exact Consideration of Human Infirmary. And in truth, Man has more to apprehend from himself in Prosperity, than in Adversity. He is almost always upon the Guard in an Afflicted State, whereas he is for the most part continually disarm'd in a Prosperous one. When every thing smiles, when all Things succeed to his Wishes, when the Winds blow only gentle Gales, he will find it difficult for him not to forget himself, and to avoid being lull'd asleep upon the Confidence of so flattering a Security. This is not all. There is something still harder to surmount, than this languishing Inactivity, this supine Indolence. Good Fortune attacks him with Weapons still more Dangerous. Is He a Voluptuous Man? She tempts him with Pleasure; Is he Revengeful? She lays His Enemies at his Feet, and offers him an easy Vengeance. Has he a Tincture  
of

of Vanity? She decrees him Divine Honours, and burns Incense before Him. In so perilous a Condition how can he conduct himself? How can he ward off the Blows of an Enemy, who never fails to find out the weak Part, and assails him with Weapons, whose Strokes are rather agreeable, than painful? It was for this Reason, that the Grand *Cyrus*, who was indisputably allow'd to be the Greatest Man of all Antiquity, not only upon the Authority of *Xenophon's* History, but from the glorious Character given of him by the Prophet *Isaiah*, declares at his Death, in the Presence of His Children and Friends, as that History shews, *That tho' every thing during the Course of his Life had succeeded to his Desire, he had nevertheless a continual secret Diffidence of Futurity, and that a certain Fear had perpetually kept him within the Bounds of Modesty, and prevented him from being transported with an immoderate Joy.* This Fear, this Diffidence, in my Opinion, sprang from the Reflection of a superior Understanding, that resisted without ceasing the flattering Caresses of an Excess of Prosperity, which seldom fails of enchanting those, who listen only to the Allurements of her Tongue. These were likewise the Sentiments of *Socrates*, *Plato*, and their Disciples, whose Opinions border'd so much upon Christianity. For this Reason,  
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without doubt, the famous *Simplician*, Priest of the *Romish* Church, and whom St. *Ambrose* honour'd as his Father, shew'd so much Joy at being acquainted by St. *Austin* himself, that he had read some Books of *Plato* translated by *Victorinus*, a celebrated Professor of Rhetorick, to whom a Statue was erected in the principal Place of *Rome*; telling him, that he was of Opinion, the reading of *Plato* would be much more useful to him than that of the other Philosophers, who contenting themselves with Corporeal Speculations, without carrying their Enquiries farther, are full of Falshood and Deceit, whereas *Plato* endeavours by his Reasonings to raise the Mind to the Knowledge of God, and of his Eternal Word. St. *Austin* himself relates this in his Confessions, where he makes no Scruple to own, that he had read in the Works of *Plato*, and his Disciples, tho' not in express Terms, yet to the same Effect, and supported by many Reasons, *That the Word was in God, and that the Word was God, and that all Things were made by him, &c.* which is manifestly the Beginning of St. *John's* Gospel. Wherefore St. *Austin* likewise says in his Treatise of the true Religion, that several Philosophers of the School of *Plato* had voluntarily embrac'd the Christian Religion, because without any considerable Change either of Expressions or Doctrine



ctrine a Platonick might become a Christian. And this appear'd in respect to *Victorinus*, so well vers'd in the Works of *Plato*, who was converted to the Christian Faith in an Advanc'd Age, and with a Zeal so remarkable, that he could not be prevail'd on to make Profession of his Faith in secret, as the Priests themselves propos'd to him; but esteem'd it an Honour to enroll himself under the Banner of Jesus Christ, in the Presence of the whole Church, to their Great Edification. It must not then be thought, that Vanity is the only Motive to the Study of Eloquence and Philosophy, and that what we call polite Learning is of no Service to the Labourers employ'd in the Lord's Vineyard. Indeed there was a Time, when nothing more was requir'd to effectuate all at once the Conversion of 3000 Men, than to say, *Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that this Jesus, whom ye crucified, was the Lord and Christ sent from God.* There was a Time, when one Drop of Martyrs Blood engender'd an Army of the Faithful; But these great Events were the Effects of the Divine Omnipotence, and of Grace Triumphant. These surprizing Strokes proceeded from the same Hand, that form'd Heaven and Earth, that divided the Sea to open a Passage for his People, that made Showers of Manna fall in the Desert, and from dry Rocks drew

drew Springs of Refreshing Water. There are other Times, when the Eternal Wisdom hath pursued the ordinary Methods, and in which it was her Pleasure, that they, who spoke in her Name, should employ all the Address of Eloquence to gain the Heart of Man, and lead him into the Way of Salvation. It was this sublime Eloquence of the *Athanasiuses*, the *Basiles*, the *Gregories*, the *Ambroses*, the *Austins*, the *Chrysostomes*, that drew after them the People, attracted by the Sacred Nectar, which flow'd from their Lips, more abundantly than from those of *Homer's Nestor*. It is this Eloquence, which astonishes and terrifies daily in the Christian Pulpits. 'Tis there, we see shine in all their Splendor the Three Kinds of Discourse, so celebrated amongst the *Greek* and *Roman* Orators. It is from thence, that the Minister of the Word of God propounds to his Auditors the most important Deliberations, that can come under the Consideration of Mankind, whilst he is persuading them to devote themselves to the Exercises of a Christian Life, and to renounce the false Maxims of the World. It is there, that the same Orator employs sometimes the Vehemence of the Judicial Kind, when he makes his Audience the Judges, and accuses before Them those flagitious Criminals, who openly attack the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, or pro-

profane it by their Hypocrisy. In fine, it is there, he finds occasion to display all the Magnificence of the Demonstrative Stile, in praising the Virtues of Worthy Men, and in celebrating the Constancy of Martyrs, with the Trophies of their Victorious Faith. Is it necessary to say any thing farther to shew, that, when we cultivate Eloquence, which is of so great Service to Religion, we enter into the Spirit of the first Heroes of Christianity. I don't know, whether I dare add, that it is not to deviate from them even to exercise Poetry, which is the other Pole of our Academical Exercises. And let none take Offence at the latter of these Immortal Sisters; she is equally noble and chaste with the other; and Her Dignity cannot be disputed, since she is admitted to the Service of our Altars. She has there purified her self from the Stains of Her Original; And as the Catholick Church hath sanctified in our Temples the Use of Images, which once introduc'd Idolatry into the World, she has in like manner sanctified Poetry, which in the Beginning was consecrated to the Honour of False Gods, and employ'd to express impure Passions, or publick Defamations. The Abuse therefore, that hath been made of Poetry, must not be imputed to Her as a Crime, for in her self she is all Divine, all charming, and  
 ever

ever animated with a certain Fire, that approaches Inspiration. It is from thence, that all those, who made Profession of teaching the Polite Sciences, who were for the most part learned and pious Ecclesiasticks, have always join'd the Study of Poetry with that of Eloquence; This is still the Method of that Renown'd Society, which had its Rise in the preceding Century, and having particularly apply'd it self to the Preaching the Gospel amongst the Infidels, regardless of the Fatigues and Dangers, whereby Her Children were frequently led to the Crown of Martyrdom, and by which one of the first Saints of this Society acquir'd the inestimable Title of Apostle of the *Indies*, applies nevertheless Part of Her Labours to the Education of Youth, so much to the Advantage of Religion, and the Honour of the State. Thus we see in all Times, that Eminent Saints and Bishops, far from slighting Poetry, have esteem'd, cherish'd, and cultivated it. St. Gregory, Bishop of *Nazianzum*, the Profoundness of whose Doctrine procur'd him the Sirname of Divine, was famous for composing a great Number of Pieces of Poetry, one of which was entitled *The Tragedy of the Suffering Jesus*; and I remark this with the more Pleasure, because the same Subject, under the same Title, has been treated in our own Language, not exactly



actly in a Dramatick Stile, but by way of an Heroick Poem, by an Illustrious Bishop, who is at present one of the principal Ornaments of the *French* Academy. We read likewise with Advantage the Poetical Compositions of *Synesius* Bishop of *Ptolemais*, those of *St. Paulinus* Bishop of *Nola*, those of the famous *Sidonius Apollinaris* Bishop of *Clermont* in *Auvergne*; and to come nearer to our own Time, how many Cardinals have esteem'd it an Honour to excel in this Way of Writing? I bring as Instances of this the Cardinals *Bembo*, *Sadolet*, and *Adrian*, who besides by his learned Observations upon the *Latin* Tongue, was the greatest Instrument of establishing amongst us the Purity of that Language, once the Mistress of the Universe. But why do I mention only Cardinals? Two Sovereign Pontiffs *Urban VIII.* and *Alexander VII.* frequently sought some Relaxation from the Immense Labours of their Apostleship amongst the Innocent Recreations of Poetry. After all this, is it not Matter of Praise to our *French* Prelates, that they distinguish'd themselves by this sort of Performances, particularly Cardinal *Perron*, Mr. *Bertant* Bishop of *Seez*, *Pontus de Thiart de Bissi* Bishop of *Chalons*, *James Amyat* Bishop of *Auxerre*, the celebrated Translator of *Plutarch*, who in translating the infinite Number of *Greek* Verses, that are quoted  
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by that Author, hath acquitted himself with all the Elegance the *French* Tongue was then capable of, the famous *William du Vair* Bishop of *Lysieux*, and Keeper of the Seals of *France*, who hath given us, at the End of his Eloquent Works, a Paraphrase in Verse of the Psalm, *By the Waters of Babylon*, so noble and excellent, that it is easy to infer, this was not a bare Trial of Skill, but that he must have exercis'd his Talent on other Subjects, to have attain'd to so great a Degree of Perfection in it; Mr *Godeau* Bishop of *Graee* and *Venoe*, Mr *Desportes* Abbot of *Tyron*; I even doubt, whether the Great Cardinal *Richlieu*, our Founder, must not be comprehended in this Number, who, tho' he held so Eminent a Rank amongst the Ministers of State, was not less affected with the Charms of the Muses, and the Pleasures of all sorts of Literature. 'Tis to Him we owe the Revival of the Passion for Polite Learning in *France*, which was extremely diminish'd from the Reign of the Princes of the House of *Valois*, and which peradventure would be at present totally annihilated, without the favourable Protection of LEWIS the Great, that supports and animates it. The Nobility of the Court and City, those happy Mortals born in Opulence, bred in Luxury, accusom'd to Indolence, are only engag'd in the Pursuit of present and obvious Plea-

Pleasures, and who, for want of a sufficient Knowledge of the infinite Charms of polite Learning, neglect it in their Youth, without foreseeing, that they will often repent before their Death, the having voluntarily depriv'd themselves of the agreeable Consolation they might have enjoy'd, when decay of Strength, and disorder of Body, will no longer support the Fatigue of their voluptuous Sensualities.

Thus it is necessary, that from time to time the most sublime Geniuses be promoted to the most eminent Dignities, who fix their Affections upon worthy Objects, and do not blush to acknowledge it, in order to set good Examples even to those, who are not capable of following them.

'Tis upon this, my Lord, that I offer You my Congratulations, as well as upon Your Imitation of so many great Prelates in tempering the Severity of Your Episcopal Functions with the Delights of Academical Studies. Your Zeal hath sufficiently distinguish'd it self by Performances worthy of the warm Devotion of the early Ages of the Church, by your Synodical Statutes, by your Hierarchical Regulations, by your Pastoral Letters, which were so generally approv'd, by your Catechism, which can never be enough commended, where you have distributed with your own Hands

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the Bread of the Gospel for the People, and where the whole Science of Christianity is comprehended in so small a Compass. I pass by in Silence those excellent Works, which are not yet made Publick, and amongst others Your Mystical and Moral Comment upon the Old and New Testament, whereof the Title alone brings along with it an Idea of an Undertaking not only Immense, but of infinite Advantage, and which for that Reason you have been exhorted to publish by the Brief of *Innocent* the XIth. The Academy, my Lord, does not pretend unadvisedly to divide your Time with the Important Occupations annex'd to your Sacred Ministry; But on the other Hand, we must not dissemble, that you have given us a sort of Right to expect an Account from you of those leisure-Hours, of those Hours of Tranquility, which you may properly call yours; for what Hopes may we not conceive after the Discourse we heard you pronounce on the Day of your Reception? What an happy Fertility, what a Flow of Exquisite Thoughts, what Choice of Words, what Richness of Expression! You are scarce enter'd into the Academy, but you perform all the Functions of it; the Panegyrick of *LEWIS* the Great, which takes up the greatest Part of your Discourse, is worthy of the Benefactions  
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we have receiv'd from that Monarch, and if it does not entirely acquit us towards him, it shews at least, that the Spirit of Ingratitude does not Reign amongst Us. You have prais'd His Valour, His Justice, His Prudence, His Activity, His Love of His People, in short, all His Royal Virtues; this is Your Province as a Minister of State; Permit me after You, my Lord, to praise His Eloquence; this is my Province as a Member of the Academy; and this is not so inconsiderable an Advantage, but a *Roman* Emperor believ'd himself honour'd, when His Statue was erected with this Inscription, *To the Emperor Numerianus the most Eloquent Orator of his Time.* This perhaps was carrying the matter too far. Kings perhaps are not usually made to persuade by their Discourse. The use of the Sovereign Power, wherewith God hath entrusted them, is more beneficial to the People, provided it be exercis'd according to the Rules of Justice, than if the Monarch was oblig'd to persuade those to a Sense of their Duty, whom he ought to make obey him; But it will be always the Praise of *LEWIS* the Great, and what may be declar'd with the strictest Regard to Truth, that He has no Subject in His Kingdoms, who speaks with more Justness, more Elegance, more Grace, more Dignity, or more Energy. I

ever esteem'd it a very great Honour, that I was chosen a Member of the Academy by those very Men, who assisted at its Birth. I have made its Occupations the Pleasures of my Life; I have preferr'd the Title of a Member of the Academy to other Employments, some whereof I could have obtain'd by the ordinary Methods. But I never, my Lord, set so great a Value upon it, as I have done, since it has procur'd me a more particular Relation with You. Especially after I was entrusted with the Delivery of His Majesties Message, so full of Esteem and Affection for the Academy, when I was appointed to demand His Approbation with regard to the Place, which we had design'd for You, and which You now fill with so much Merit. Long, my Lord, may You enjoy this New Dignity, and give Us leave to hope, that You will frequently honour the Company with Your Presence, in order to assist us in establishing more than ever that Spirit of Order and Discipline, which every where accompanies You.

*A Dis-*

A DISCOURSE pronounc'd the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, by *Mr. de Fenelon Abbot*, at present *Archbishop Duke of Cambray*, Preceptor to the Young Princes of France, when he was admitted into the Place of *Mr. Pellisson*, Master of Requests.

I Ought, Gentlemen, to succeed to *Mr. Pellisson's* Eloquence, as well as to his Place, to be able to make a suitable Acknowledgement for the Honour I receive, and to repair the Loss this Society sustains in the Death of that valuable Man.

By translating in his early Youth the greatest Part of *Homer*, He made himself Master of the Art of heightning the least Description with Spirit and Beauty. In a little time he began a Work upon the Civil-Law, which had no other Fault, than that it was not finish'd. From these noble Essays he soon proceeded to his Master-piece, the History of the Academy. Facility, Invention, Elegance, Insinuation, Propriety of Thought, and ingenious Turn of Expression, the distinguishing Characteristicks of his

Genius, shine thoroughout the Piece. We may apply to him, what *Horace* said of the *Romans*, He dar'd successfully ; His Hands made Flowers spring up on all Sides ; whatever he touch'd, receiv'd a New Grace. The most common Herbs of the Field were fitted by Him to be the Crowns of Heroes ; and the Rule, so necessary for others, of chosing no Subject, that is not capable of being embellish'd, did not seem to regard Him. His noble and easy Style resembled the Motions of the fabulous Deities, who glide through the Air, without touching the Earth. His Relations discover such exquisite Judgement in the Choice of Circumstances, a Variety so entertaining, Turns so new and proper even in recounting the most common Things, so much Industry in connecting the Facts, and so much Skill in transporting the Reader into the very Scenes of Action, that agreeably deceiv'd by the artificial Texture of the Narration, He imagines himself actually present, and an Eye-Witness of every Passage.

Every one reads with Pleasure and Admiration the Description of the Birth of the Academy, fancies himself in the very House of Mr. *Comart*, which, if I may use the Expression, was the Nursery of it ; remarks with infinite Delight the Simplicity, Order, Politeness, and Elegance, which reign'd in those



those Assemblies, and attracted the Favours of an eminent Minister; then the Jealousies and Umbrages, which interrupted the Calm of those happy Beginnings; and afterwards the Reputation, which the Académie acquired by the Writings of Her first Members. There we see the Illustrious *Racan*, the Inheritor of *Matherbe's* Harmony, *Vaugelas*, renown'd for the Delicacy of his Ear in reforming our Language, *Corneille*, whose Great and Bold Characters shew, that he drew with a masterly Hand, *Voiture* ever accompanied with an easy, smiling Train of Graces. There we discover Merit and Virtue in strict Alliance with Erudition and Delicacy, Birth and Rank with a refin'd Taste of Literature. But I am insensibly carried beyond the Bounds, which I prescrib'd my self, and while I am speaking of the Dead, I come too near the Living, whose Modesty might be offended with my Encomiums.

Whilst this fortunate Revolution in favour of Learning was depending, Mr. *Pellisson* takes Occasion to recommend to Posterity the Character of the Great Encourager of it. Cardinal *Richlieu* at that Juncture was changing the whole Face of Affairs in *Europe*, and assembling the scatter'd Remains of our Civil Wars, in order to lay the Foundation of a Power superior to all others.

Ever penetrating the closest Designs of our Enemies, Impenetrable in respect to those of his Master, He had the Address to direct in his Cabinet the Motions of the most secret Springs of Forreign Courts, and foment and maintain the Spirit of Division amongst them. Steady in his Maxims, and inviolable in his Promises, He shew'd the surprising Effects of a Wise Administration, and of Allies placing an Entire Confidence in their Confederates. Endued by Nature with an exquisite Sagacity in knowing Men, and the Way to employ them according to their respective Talents, he engag'd them to his Person, and afterwards in his Designs for the Advantage of the Publick. By these powerful Arts, the Pride of the imperious House of *Austria*, which threatned to reduce all *Europe* under Her Yoke, receiv'd a Mortal Blow. He put an End to the repeated Rebellions of the *Huguenots*, which of all his Successes was the most Essential to the Internal Peace of *France*. And, to crown all, he introduc'd Peace into a Court, where there had been a lasting Scene of Discord, and this was a Work of the most Difficulty from his having an Aspiring and Jealous Nobility to contend with, whom he found in Possession of an Independant State. Thus Time, which effaces the Reputation of others, serves only to advance His; and the

the farther He is remov'd from us, He is seen to the greater Advantage. But amidst his painful Offices He found some Moments of agreeable Leisure, and reliev'd the Anxieties of Business with the Charms of Eloquence and Poetry. He receiv'd into his Bosom the Academy, whilst it was in its Infancy, and a Discerning Magistrate, a Favourer of Learning, was his Successor in the Protection of it. *LEWIS* adds to it the Lustre, which never fails of distinguishing, whatever he honours with his Countenance. Under the Shadow of this Great Name, You apply Your selves incessantly to reform and purify our Language.

Since Men of Learning and Judgment have return'd back to the ancient Standards, the Abuse of Wit and Language is reform'd; and a Way of Writing more natural, more nervous, and more concise, is introduc'd. No farther Care is employ'd upon Words, than as they are of absolute Necessity to express our Thoughts in their full Force and Extent; and no other Thoughts are allow'd off, but such as are just, solid, conclusive, and arising from the Subject. The Use of Learning, which was formerly affected with so much vain Parade, is now rejected, except in Cases, where it is indispensable; Even Wit it self receives a Check, because the Perfection of Art consists in imitating  
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the Simplicity of Nature so exactly, that it may be mistaken for Her. From hence a luxurious Fancy no longer passes for Wit; but that Title is adjudg'd to belong only to a regular and correct Genius, which converts every thing to Sentiment, which closely follows the Modesty and Plainness of Nature, which brings all her Thoughts to the Scale of Reason, and esteems nothing beautiful, that is not conformable to Truth. The present Age is convinc'd, that the Florid Style, however agreeable and engaging it may appear, is not the true Sublime, which rejecting all ostentatious Ornaments of Pomp and Magnificence, is found only in the Natural.

Men are at last convinc'd, that they ought to write, as the *Raphaels*, the *Carra-ches*, and the *Poussins* painted, that they should neither labour to invent unnatural Extravagancies, nor trifle with the Pencil to shew the Vivacity of their Imagination, but employ their utmost Care to copy after Nature. It is now acknowledg'd, that the Beauties of Discourse resemble those of Architecture. The boldest Pieces, and those, which come nearest to the *Gothick* Order, are not esteem'd the Best. Meer Ornaments, which are of no Use to the *Ædifice*, ought not to take Place, but all the Parts necessary to the Support of it, should be skilfully  
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turn'd into Ornaments, provided a strict Regard be had to observe the just Proportions.

Thus in a Discourse we retrench all useless Embellishments, which neither serve to illustrate what is obscure, nor to represent in the most lively Colours what should be most expos'd to View, nor to prove a Truth by a Variety of engaging Turns, nor to excite the Passions, which are the only Springs capable of moving and persuading the Audience; For Passion is the Soul of Discourse. This, Gentlemen, hath been the Progress of Letters for Sixty Years past; which Mr *Pelisson* would have describ'd, if he might have continued his History of the Academy.

A Minister, ever ready to employ Persons of the most eminent Abilities, brought him out of the Course of his Studies into publick Business. Then how great was his Probity, and his Integrity, how constant His Gratitude towards his Benefactor? In that Post of Trust, to which he was advanc'd, his whole Endeavours turn'd upon doing Good, upon Discovering, and Employing Merit. To shew his Virtues in their best Lights, He wanted nothing but to be unfortunate. He became so, Gentlemen. His Innocence and His Courage appear'd clearly in the Prison. The *Bastille* prov'd an agreeable Soli-

Solitude to him, where he apply'd himself to the Improvement of Learning.

Happy Captivity, desirable Chains, which were the Means of reducing at last to the Yoke of Faith a Mind, which before knew no Restraint. During this Leisure he went up to the Sources of Tradition to fetch Arguments, wherewith he might oppose Truth; But Truth prevail'd, and appear'd to him in all her Charms. He came out of Prison, honour'd with the King's Esteem and Favour; but what is still greater, he came out, determin'd to be an humble Profelyte to the Church. The Sincerity and Disinterestedness of his Conversion occasion'd his delaying to perform the Ceremony of it, from the Apprehension that his Talents might draw on him the Recompense of an Employment, which a Person of less Virtue than himself would have solicited.

From that Moment he never discontinu'd Speaking, Writing, and employing all the Favours his Credit with his Prince had procur'd him, towards recalling his Wandring Brethren. Happy Fruit of the most fatal Error. We must have felt within our selves the anxious Pains, which are to be undergone in this difficult Passage from Darkness to Light, to be animated with that Vivacity, and endued with that Patience, Tenderness,

derness, and Delicacy of Charity, which shine in his Controversies.

Notwithstanding the weak Condition, to which he was reduc'd, we saw him at the Foot of the Altar, and at the Point of Death, celebrating his Feast, to use his own Expression, and the Anniversary of his Conversion. Alas! we heard him, excited by his Zeal and his Courage, promise with a dying Voice, that he would finish his great Work upon the Sacrament. Yes, I saw him with Tears in his Eyes, I heard him, he said all that a Christian, nourish'd for so many Years with the Word of God, can say, to prepare himself to receive the holy Sacrament. 'Tis true, Death, putting on the Image of Sleep, surpris'd him; But she found him well prepar'd.

In fine, Gentlemen, the Affairs of Justice and Religion, which the King had committed to his Care, did not divert him from applying himself to the polite Sciences, to which he was destin'd by Nature. His Pen was immediately pitch'd upon to write the History of the present Reign. With what Joy shall we behold, Gentlemen, in this History, a Prince, who in his early Youth, finishes by his Steadiness, what *Henry* the Great His Grandfather scarce dar'd to attempt? *LEWIS* extinguishes the Rage of Duelling, whereby the most Noble Blood  
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of *FRANCE* had been spilt. He raises his sinking Authority, regulates his Revenues, and introduces Discipline among his Troops. Whilst with one Hand he levels with the Ground the Walls of so many strong Places, in the Sight of his astonish'd Enemies, with the Other he makes the Polite Arts and Sciences flourish by his Munificence, in the peaceful Bosom of *France*.

But what do I see, Gentlemen? A new Confederacy, form'd of the most considerable Potentates of *Europe*, threatening to besiege this vast Kingdom, as if it were a single Fortrefs. *LEWIS* alone, during the Space of Five Years, makes important Conquests, and gains signal Victories over the united Forces of this League, which had the Presumption to boast, that they would oppress him with Ease, and make his Provinces become the Scene of Desolation.

But who dares attempt to describe *Lewis* in this last Campaign, more Glorious by his Patience, than his Conquest. He is determin'd to besiege the most impregnable Place of the Low Countries, encompass'd by Two Rivers, guarded by a Citadel rais'd on an Inaccessible Rock, consisting of several Fortresses, tho' but one Place, having one Army within for Garrison, and Another without, compos'd of an incredible Number of *English*, *Dutch*, *Spanish* and *German* Forces, commanded



manded by a Chief, accustom'd to risque all Hazards and Dangers in Battel, and at a time, when Nature her self alter'd her Course, and caus'd an Inundation in the Summer Season. In the mean while he receives Intelligence, that His Fleet, however Invincible in Courage, oppress'd by the unequal Numbers of his Enemies, is burnt, and he supports this Stroke of Ill Fortune with as much Temper, as if he had been exercis'd in Adversity. He is calm and serene under Difficulties, full of Expedients under Disappointments, and so Human in respect to the Besieg'd, that he even prolongs the Siege, however dangerous, to spare the City, which resists him, and which it is in his Power to reduce to Ashes. He never places his Confidence in the Multitude of his experienc'd Soldiers, in the Noble Ardour of his Captains, in his Personal Valour, which animates his whole Army, or in the many Victories, which he has gain'd, but in the inaccessible Azylum of the Lord of Hosts. He returns at length Victorious, with his Eyes directed towards the Throne of the Almighty, who disposes of Victory according to his Divine Will; and what is still more glorious than all his Successes, he forbids our Praises.

Possess'd of a Grandeur so humble and modest, which is not more above all Encomiums,

miums, than it is above all Events, may He, Gentlemen, rely only upon his Virtue, shew an inviolable Regard to Truth and Justice, be known to his Enemies, ( this Wish comprehends the Prosperity of *Europe* ) become the Umpire of all Nations, after having remov'd their Jealousies. May He extend his Goodness to his People in the Blessings of a profound Peace, be long the Delight of Mankind, and Reign over them in such a manner, as if he had no other View, than the Glory of God, who reign'd over Him.

This, Gentlemen, is, what Mr *Pelisson* would have immortaliz'd in his History. The Academy has produc'd more Persons capable of transmitting it to late Posterity; But so vast a Subject invites You All to write. Enter therefore, Gentlemen, upon this glorious Work of celebrating so Distinguish'd a Reign, I cannot give a greater Testimony of my unfeigned Zeal for the Honour of this Society, than by forming a Wish so worthy of It.

F I N I S.